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WELCOME

FUTURE FERRIES SET TO BE CLEAN

At the time of writing, the new P&O ferry for the Dover-Calais route, P&O Pioneer, having been handed over, is heading for her new home port. As the next new ferry to begin operations out of the UK, as discussed in the February issue, she is one of many newbuilds recently completed as ferry companies look to not only renew their fleets but also deploy more environmentally friendly tonnage.

The trend in the commercial sector, as is evident on our Newbuild column (pages 18-19), is for dual-fuel operation, the use of cleaner fuels and even electric ships, and the ferry industry is following suit. P&O Ferries intends that Pioneer will operate entirely on battery power when manoeuvring in port. The batteries will be recharged by the ferry's four Wärtsilä diesel engines during crossings. Other ferry companies are working towards the use of greener technology, and this is discussed on page 12 of this issue.

To keep track of the latest in ship technology, and of course much more, over the coming year, why not take advantage of our latest offers, which can be found on page 22? You can then enjoy Ships Monthly throughout 2023.

Nick Leach

Nicholas Leach
Editor
sm.ed@kelsey.co.uk

The new P&O ferry, P&O Pioneer, left China in early March, and was expected to arrive at Dover on 2 April and then cross to Calais for crew familiarisation ready for May service.

Contributors this month

Colin Smith

A native of Clydebank, Colin Smith was inspired to be a shipping enthusiast from a young age by childhood trips aboard Clyde steamers.

Paul Brown

Dr Paul Brown is an author and photographer whose various books include Maritime Portsmouth and Historic Ships: The Survivors.

Matt Davies

Matt Davies works in the bus industry and juggles his work with looking after his family and his hobby of travelling on, writing about and photographing ferries.

Jim Shaw

Jim Shaw is a retired engineer who has worked at various locations around the world and has always had a deep interest in ships and shipping.

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SHIPSPOTTING AIDA CRUISES AROUND THE WORLD

COVER Regina Baltica departing Algeciras on 6 October 2022. She was built in 1980 and is now operated by Balearia. See pages 47-53 for a full history of the veteran ferry. CHRIS BROOKS

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Remembering the short-lived Canadian City Line and the ships it operated. **Jim Shaw**

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Caledonian MacBrayne's 1998-built ferry Clansman in the Sound of Mull in September 2018; Cal Mac are marking half a century of operations, and the feature on page 36 looks at the company's services on Scotland's picturesque west coast. MARITIME PHOTOGRAPHIC

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CLASSIC LINER

A LAST VISIT TO WINDSOR CASTLE

Peter Knego remembers visiting Margarita L, the former Union-Castle liner RMS Windsor Castle, 25 years ago, in late 1998, when the ship was languishing in the Bay of Eleusis, just before she was scrapped.

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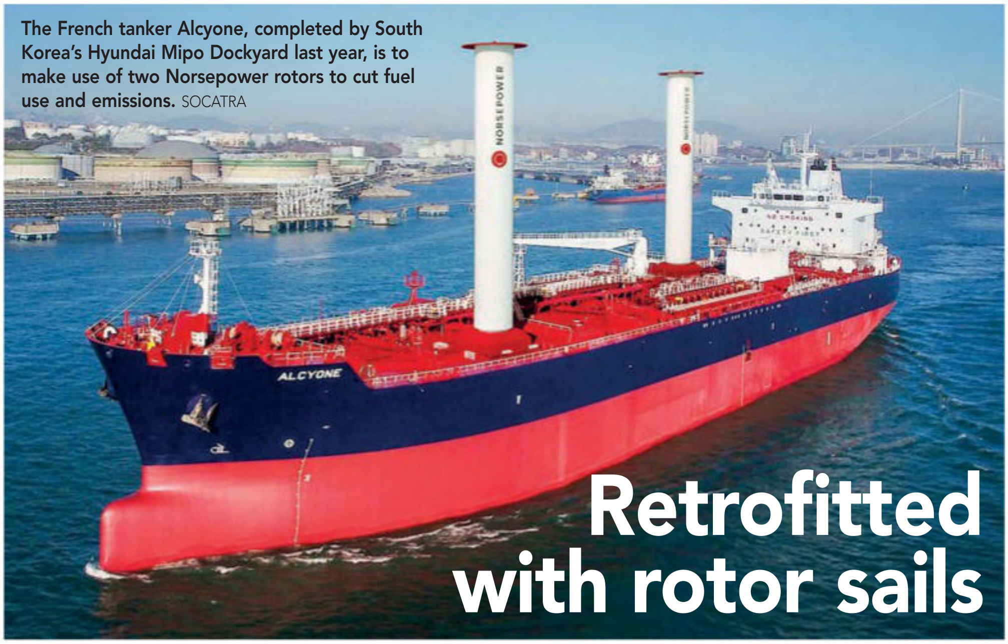
Former European Seaway on move

OLD FERRY

The former P&O Ferries freight ship European Seaway (1991/22,906gt) was sold to Sea Lines and renamed Sea Antolia in 2021 and has now moved again to operate a freight route between Malaga and Tanger Med, which was due to start on 6 March.

Built at Bremerhaven's Seebeckwerft as part of a four-ship ro-pax series for P&O Ferries, she operated on the Dover-Zeebrugge service until 2012, when she was chartered to GLID, a joint venture between Centrica Renewable Energy and EIG to support technicians working on the North Sea Lynn and Inner Dowsing wind farms off Skegness. Her original capacity was 200 passengers and 120 trailers. RP

▲ **Sea Antolia at Falmouth in January 2022 prior to her departure.** GEOFF HOATHER/SHIPSPOTTING.COM



The French tanker Alcyone, completed by South Korea's Hyundai Mipo Dockyard last year, is to make use of two Norsepower rotors to cut fuel use and emissions. SOCATRA

Retrofitted with rotor sails

FRENCH TANKER

Rotors continue to be seen as viable fuel and emission reducing devices and French tanker operator Socatra has been the latest to take advantage of their use. The Bordeaux-based company, founded in 1977, has entered into a contract with Norway's Norsepower to have two 35m-tall rotors retrofitted to its 2022-built medium-range (MR) tanker Alcyone, which is currently on charter to TotalEnergies.

The Norsepower rotors are modern versions of the 1920s-developed Flettner Rotor and are spun against a sidewind using a small electric motor. This creates high and low pressure areas around the cylinder that aid a ship's forward propulsion. The rotational direction of the cylinder can be changed to match wind direction, although there is little benefit gained from head or tail winds during which the rotors are normally turned off.

Installations to date have indicated their use can reduce fuel consumption and carbon emissions by as much as eight per cent depending upon wind conditions over the vessel's route. JS

Sovereign goes to MSC

FLEET NEWS

Continuing its spending spree, Mediterranean Shipping Co (MSC) has acquired the 26-year-old Sovereign Maersk, renaming her MSC Domna X following handover in Singapore at the end of January.

Although at the time of delivery into service in 1997 her container intake was not disclosed, Sovereign Maersk was the largest container ship in the world, being the first to have a capacity in excess of 8,000TEU.

She was the first in a series of 25 similar vessels built for Maersk at the company's Odense shipyard facility over a period of eight years from 1996. Her capacity was increased to 9,600TEU in 2012, by raising her accommodation to allow more containers to be stowed on deck. KA

▲ **MSC's new acquisition, MSC Domna X, anchored in Singapore's Eastern anchorage on 5 February.** KRISPEN ATKINSON

First of four LNG-fuelled PCTCs

NYK LINE
LNG BATTERY HYBRID

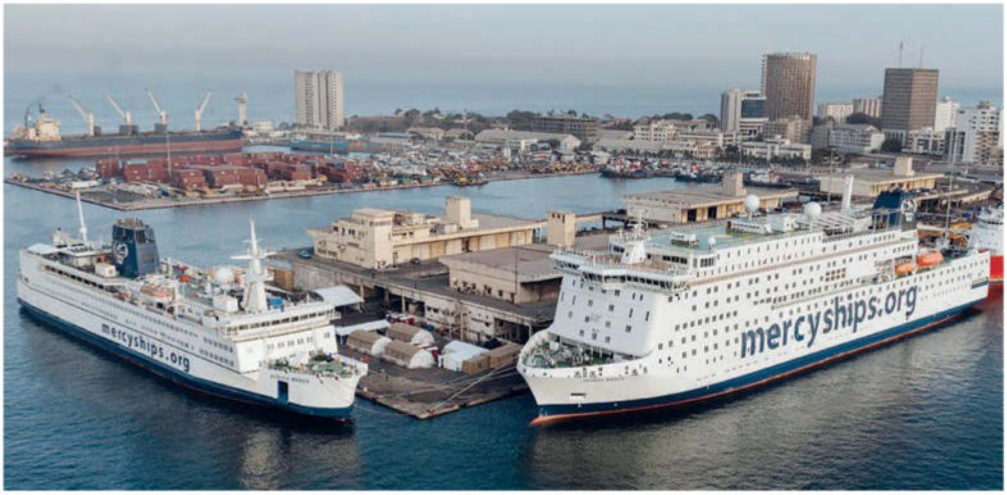
▲ **Japan's NYK Line has taken delivery of the LNG/battery hybrid Jasmine Leader as the first of four similar-sized PCTCs it is having built in China.** NYK LINE

VEHICLE CARRIERS

China Merchants Jinling Shipyard at Nanjing has delivered the 7,000CEU capacity car carrier Jasmine Leader to Japan's NYK Line as the first of four similar-sized LNG-fuelled pure car truck carriers (PCTC) it is building for the company.

The ship is propelled by a WinGD 7X62DF2.1 low-pressure dual-fuel engine that uses an Intelligent Control by Exhaust Recycling (iCER) system to cut methane emissions from the exhaust by 50 per cent. In addition, the vessel is equipped with battery hybrid technology to improve fuel efficiency. Construction of the four new ships is in line with NYK Line's plan to replace current vessels with around 40 LNG-fuelled PCTCs. JS

Global Mercy begins operations



▲ **The 37,000gt Global Mercy (right) berthed at Dakar, Senegal near the 16,575gt Africa Mercy (ex-Dronning Ingrid) (left), which entered Mersey Ship service in 2007.** C. BROMLEY

NEW FERRY

The newly-built hospital ship Global Mercy, built by China's Tianjin Xingang shipyard for Lausanne, Switzerland-based Mercy Ships, arrived in Dakar, Senegal on 14 February to begin surgical operations at the West African port. The 174m by 28.6m vessel will be berthed at Dakar over the next half-year during which more than 800 operations are scheduled to be performed.

Completed as the world's largest civilian hospital ship, and the first ship in the world to be built as a civilian hospital ship from the start, the 37,000gt Global Mercy has six operating theatres and 200 beds along with laboratories, general outpatient clinics and eye and dental clinics plus extensive medical training facilities.

Up to 640 volunteers from more than 60 nations will staff the vessel at any one time and over 600 African health professionals from Senegal and neighboring Gambia will receive training while the ship is berthed in the port of Dakar. JS

Chain ferry out of overhaul

POOLE FERRY

The Sandbanks chain ferry Bramble Bush Bay returned to Poole Harbour on 7 February under tow by the tug Mercia following the ferry's overhaul at Falmouth, which included a change of hull colour from blue to red.

The floating bridge (pictured at Poole below) sustained serious damage to one of its prows during the tow to Falmouth last November, which delayed its return to service. New steel prow sections, fabricated in Poland, arrived at Poole's Bulwark Quay on 6 February. The new steelwork was fitted alongside at the Port of Poole and, following recommissioning tests, the ferry is returned to service at the end of February. KM

HMM goes for methanol

NEW BOXBOATS

Following the led of several other shipping companies, South Korea's HMM has chosen methanol to fuel its next series of newbuilds, which will consist of nine container carriers to be completed by compatriot builders Hyundai Samho Heavy Industries and HJ Shipbuilding and Construction.

To be delivered in 2025 and 2026, the 9,000TEU vessels are expected to cost $1.2 billion en bloc to build and will be employed on routes connecting Asia with the Americas and India.

HMM has already signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with five suppliers of methanol for the new ships, but will also continue to examine other alternative fuels, including LNG, hydrogen and green ammonia. JS

The 23,964TEU HMM Oslo, which already makes use of a number of energy-saving devices, is to be followed into the HMM fleet by nine methanol-fueled ships. W. FRICKE

Changing ferries at Fishguard

Stena Nordica, arriving at Rosslare in June 2020, is being upgraded with greater capacity and new facilities prior to her move to the Irish Sea.

STENA LINE

In February Stena Line confirmed its plans to secure the future of its Fishguard-Rosslare service by redeploying the ferry Stena Nordica from its fleet. Stena Europe suffered an engine room fire in mid-February and was withdrawn from the route while she went to Birkenhead for repairs. She has been on the route for more than 20 years.

Stena Nordica, which has been operating in the Baltic Sea, is a familiar ship on the Irish Sea having provided temporary relief cover on several Irish Sea routes over the last few years. She is scheduled to replace Stena Europe at Fishguard in July.

Stena Line will commence a formal consultation with the unions representing the crew of Stena Europe, who will all be offered roles on Stena Nordica or other Stena vessels on the Irish Sea. Over the last decade, Stena has invested heavily in its Irish Sea routes with new tonnage.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

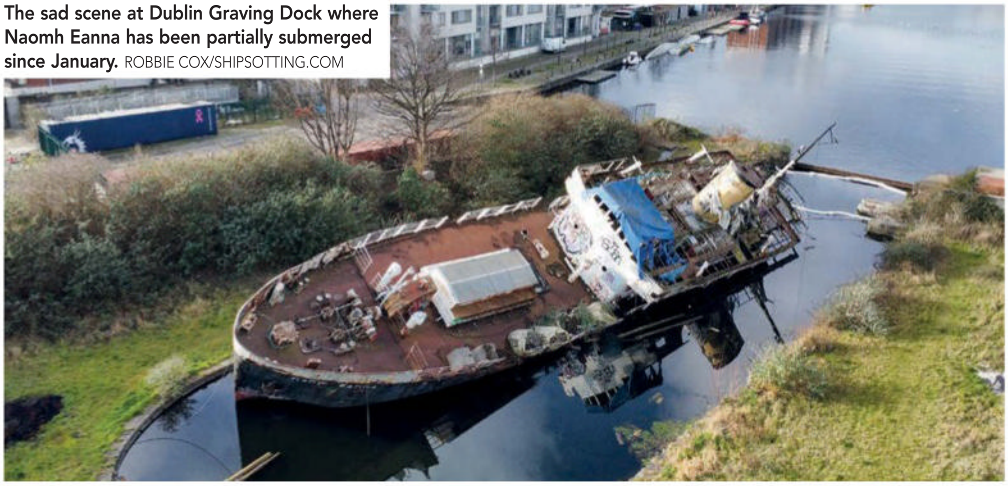
CHANNEL FIRE Investigations started into the cause of an engine room blaze that broke out in mid-Channel as the Irish Ferries vessel Isle of Innisfree (1992/28,833gt) was sailing between Dover and Calais during the evening of 3 March. A French tug towed the ship into Calais where 94 passengers and 89 crew members were safely landed the following morning. Lifeboats from Dover, Ramsgate and Dungeness went to the scene and stood by, along with a French salvage tug. RP

NEW OPERATOR Rathlin Island Ferry Ltd ceased operations after final sailings on the 45-minute link from Ballycastle, Northern Ireland, on 11 January but passenger services with five trips a day resumed on 13 January thanks to new operator Dunaverty Ltd, who also plans to take vehicles once approvals from the Department for Infrastructure and Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) are in place. RP

OPERATIONS MERGED Japan's Mitsui OSK Lines (MOL) will merge its two ferry operating companies, MOL Ferry Co and Ferry Sunflower Ltd, under the MOL Ferry banner later this year to produce Japan's largest ferry and coastal ro-ro vessel operator.

CLdN BOOST The freight specialist has increased North Sea service capacity on routes from England to Rotterdam and Zeebrugge by chartering Tundraland (2002/23,128gt) to allow existing vessels to switch routes. There are also CLdN sailings from Zeebrugge to the port of Tilbury on the Thames. RP

EXTRA PORT TT-Line is bringing the Swedish port of Karlshamn into its Baltic network with direct sailings to Klaipeda in Lithuania six times a week taking 13 hours in either direction. In contrast, Fjord Line is dropping calls at Langesund, when 31,678gt sisters Stavangerfjord (2013) and Bergensfjord (2014) return to service after their conversion to use LNG fuel and Maine Gas Oil. RP



The sad scene at Dublin Graving Dock where Naomh Eanna has been partially submerged since January. ROBBIE COX/SHIPSOTTING.COM

Efforts to restore historic Irish ferry

ARAN ISLANDS

Efforts are being made to restore the former Aran Islands ferry Naomh Eanna, which is lying heeling to port and partially submerged in Dublin's Grand Canal Dock since going down during the night of 18-19 January.

The 423gt vessel was the main link from Galway to the islands for more than 20 years after being delivered from Dublin's Liffey Dockyard in April 1958. At the time, she was one of the last ferries built in Europe with a riveted hull.

Finally taken off the Coras Iompair Eirann (CIE) service to the islands of Inishmore, Ishmaan and Inisheer in 1988, she was bought the following year by Ireland's National Trust and was first berthed in the Grand Canal Dock, moving later to the Graving Dock. Several preservation plans were mooted, but all failed to get off the ground.

Naomh Eanna was launched in October 1957 and completed in April 1958. Passengers were landed from her in or boarded from small boats which met the vessel off the islands. She is historically significant, being one of the oldest Irish-built ships remaining in Ireland. RP

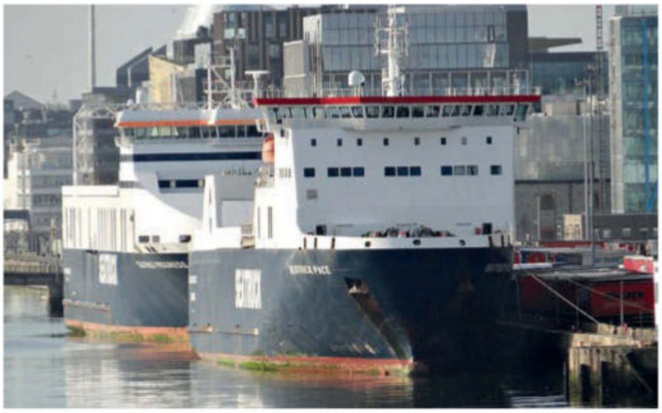
Ferry berth changes in Dublin

PORT NEWS

Dublin Port saw two ferry companies switch terminals in late January. Seatruck Ferries moved their terminal to the Alexandra Basin and the P&O river berth, close to the Toll Bridge and city centre.

This facilitated the ability to transship goods arriving on CLdN's ships from Santander in Spain for the UK Market. In late 2022 CLdN took ownership of Seatruck, the ships adopting the CLdN funnel colours. Following the move, the company introduced a four-ship rolling schedule to their Liverpool to Dublin route using Seatruck Progress, Precision, Power amd Pennant. Seatruck Pace served Dublin-Holyhead while the Point and Performance linked Heysham with Warrenpoint.

P&O returned their chartered ship Clipper Pennant to Seatruck. Pre pandemic, P&O had a four-ship operation from Dublin to Liverpool, but now the service is in the hands of just Norbay and Norbank. DF



▲ **Seatruck Progress and Seatruck Pace in Dublin in February.** DAVID FAIRCLOUGH

Methanol power

SHIP FUEL

Shipowners appear to be steadily moving towards methanol as their alternative fuel of choice to meet new environmental guidelines. This has seen China's COSCO Shipping Holdings order 12 methanol dual-fuel 24,000TEU container vessels, worth nearly $2.9 billion, from compatriot shipbuilders.

At the same time, French carrier CMA CGM has ordered a dozen 13,000TEU methanol-fuelled boxships from South Korea's Korea Shipbuilding & Offshore Engineering Co (KSOE) for delivery before the end of 2026, while competitor MSC has ordered ten smaller 11,500 TEU LNG-fuelled but methanol-ready vessels from Chinese builders.

The ten MSC ships are expected to cost $1.2 billion en bloc while the 12 CMA CGM vessels will cost over $2 billion. Since August 2021 South Korea's KSOE has obtained orders for 47 methanol-fuelled container vessels. Methanol-powered vessels accounted for 21 per cent of container ship orders last year. JS

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Historic paddler being readied for summer

KINGSWEAR CASTLE

▲ **The paddle steamer Kingswear Castle is being completely refurbished. A 25-year extension to charter to the DSR&RB Co has recently been signed and the work being carried out will ensure that she is MCA compliant for many years to come.**

HISTORIC PADDLER

After many months on the Dartmouth Steam Railway & Riverboat Co's covered slipway at Old Mill Creek, Dartmouth, the 1924-built paddle steamer Kingswear Castle was successfully relaunched on 6 December 2022 and moved to the shipyard's fitting-out berth, where work continued to prepare her for the 2023 season.

It is planned that she will re-enter passenger service on the River Dart during July, by which time Phases 1 and 2 of the Centenary Rebuild Project will have been completed. From the boiler room to the stern, the ship will have been completely refurbished. From the engine room forward, underwater steelwork including hull replating and renewal of the keelson, stringers and frames has been completed. All bulkheads have been replaced, new wiring fitted and much else besides. The cost of all this is expected around £500,000 and will be fully funded from the Paddle Steam Kingswear Castle Trust's savings.

Funding permitting, it is hoped that during the winter of 2023-24 Phase 3 of the rebuild can proceed. This will involve replacing much of the steelwork in the forward third of the ship from below the portholes to the deck and laying a new deck at a cost of another £200,000. During subsequent winters any remaining work on the centre section will be completed.

The Paddle steamer Kingwear Castle Trust needs to raise at least an extra £400,000 to allow phases 3 and 4 to go ahead and complete as much work as possible in time for the historic steamer's centenary celebrations in 2024, ensuring Kingswear Castle is in perfect condition to sail on well into her second century. In addition to applying to various grant-giving bodies and running its own fund-raising events, the PSKC Trust is thus appealing for public support.

■ For details of how to donate go to kingswearcastle.org. Details of summer sailings on the Dart can be found atdartmouthrail.river.co.uk.

Agreed into the next century

The E-Flexer Stena Embla at the Twelve Quays ferry terminal at Birkenhead.

FERRY PORT

On 17 February Stena Line signed a new deal with Peel Ports, UK Port operator, to run out of the Twelve Quays ferry terminal in Birkenhead until the beginning of the 22nd century. The Swedish company has operated twice-daily ferry services to Belfast since 2011, and the new deal will see them continue to operate there for at least another 77 years, until 2100, demonstrating the success of the partnership between the two companies.

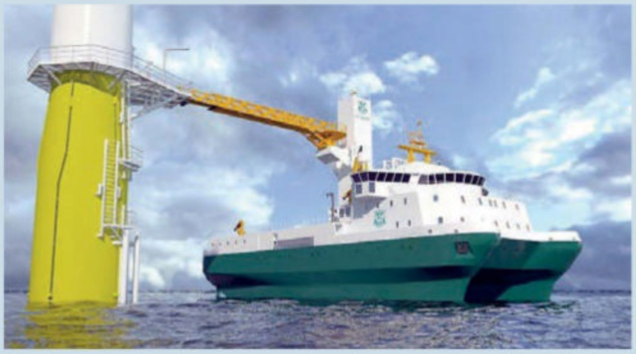
Significant investments have been made to meet current and future needs of customers. In 2021 and 2022 Stena launched two new E-Flexer ferries, Stena Edda and Stena Embla, on the service to Belfast. The terminal opened in 2002, with Norse Merchant Ferries beginning ro-ro operations.

WindKeeper SWATHs ordered

WINDFARM

Norway's GC Rieber Shipping has ordered two 'WindKeeper' hybrid diesel-electric Service Operation Vessels (SOVs) from Turkey's Cemre Shipyard, the first for delivery in 2025, which will make use of a Small Water Area Twin Hull (SWATH) design.

The 57m vessels will be completed to DNV class and will have Walk-to-Work and DPS(2) notations. A stand-alone company, WindKeeper AS has been set up by GC Rieber to own the first two ships, with two more held on option, all to be capable of being converted to fully-electric operation in the future.JS



▲ **Two hybrid Service Operation Vessels (SOVs) ordered by GC Rieber Shipping will make use of Small Water Area Twin Hull (SWATH) hulls.** CEMRE

NEWS IN BRIEF

SERVICE STOPPED P&O Ferries closed their freight service from Middlesbrough Teesport to Rotterdam Europoort when the chartered Estraden (1999/18,205gt) made a final crossing from the Netherlands on 21 January before moving to Dutch operator Transfennica. P&O continue to serve Zeebrugge with two return sailings week.

CONNEMARA The 27,414gt former Brittany Ferries ro-pax vessel, built in Italy by Visentini in 2007, received a fire float welcome to Wellington on 29 January after she completed a long delivery voyage to New Zealand via the Panama Canal. Preparations were started for the 800-passenger/2,255-lane-metre ferry to start sailings between Wellington and Picton.

VIKING GRACE The 57,565gt vessel, dating from 2013, spent three weeks in dry dock at Odense in Denmark before returning to Viking Line service in the Baltic on 12 February with new technology brought in during a major upgrade to reduce fuel consumption.

IRISH LINK Finnlines are strengthening their Belgium-Ireland freight route by bringing in Finnpulp (2002/25,132gt) to join Finnwave (2012/,816gt) on the link between Zeebrugge and Rosslare. Both vessels were built in China, the service having started in July 2022.

Manxman set for her final sea trials

ISLE OF MAN SP

The Isle of Man Steam Packet's newbuilding Manxman unergoing her sea trials in South Korean waters.

Final sea trials for the Isle of Man Steam Packet Company's new ro-pax ferry Manxman were delayed after the 14,000gt vessel had to return to the yard of South Korean builders Hyundai Mipo with a gearbox problem.

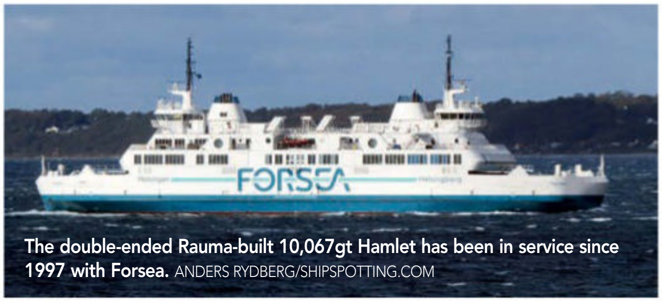
It is still hoped the 30-day delivery voyage via the Suez Canal will take place in time for the 949-passenger vessel to begin sailings from Douglas to Heysham in early summer, taking over the main service from Ben-my-Chree, the Steam Packet's last newbuilding, which was delivered from Van der Giessen de-Noord in 1998.

Steel-cutting for Manxman, which will carry over 300 more passengers than Ben-my-Chree and is 8m longer at 132m, started in August 2021, with keel-laying in December 2021 and then hull construction utilising 36 different blocks.

Power for a service speed of 18 knots comes from a line-up of Wärtsilä diesel engines comprising two ten-cylinder units, with a second pair of eight cylinders each to provide sufficient power for crossings to and from Heysham that take three hours 45 minutes.

Manxman is the third Steam Packet vessel to carry the name, the first being a twin-funnel steamer built for the Midland Railway's Irish Sea services in 1904 and sold to the Admiralty for World War I service as a seaplane carrier. The second Manxman was a single-funnel turbine steamer built by Cammell Laird in 1955, which served the island until 1982.

Great Belt takeover of ForSea ready to go ahead



The double-ended Rauma-built 10,067gt Hamlet has been in service since 1997 with Forsea. ANDERS RYDBERG/SHIPSPOTTING.COM

MOLSLINJEN

Competition authorities in Denmark and Sweden have approved a take-over by Molslinjen of the five-vessel Great Belt operation of ForSea on the short crossing between Helsingborg and Helsingør.

It becomes the tenth route for Aarhus-headquartered Mols, now into a 60th year, whose current fleet comprises 15 vessels, with the largest, the 18,009gt Hammershus, dating from 2018, and Povl Anker (1978/12,358gt), which both handle Bornholm services.

ForSea have been running with Tycho Brahe (1991/10,845gt), Aurora AF Helsingborg (1992/10,918gt) and Hamlet (1997/10,067gt), taking cars, commercial vehicles and passengers, with freight support from UK-built sisterships Mercandia IV (1989/4,511gt) and Mercandia VIII (1987/4,296gt).

FERRIES IN THE NEWS . . . FERRIES IN THE NEWS . . . FERRIES IN THE NEWS . . . FERRIES IN THE NEWS . . .

VIKING GLORY The new 65,211gt Viking Line flagship, introduced on the Stockholm-Turku service in March last year, carried her one millionth passenger on 31 January when Ulla Haaviso, accompanied by her husband Mikko, were given a special welcome in the Finnish port.

ROSELLA Viking Line's long-serving 16,879gt former Baltic ferry, dating from 1980 and the oldest vessel in the current Viking fleet, was handed over to Aegean Sea Lines on 17 January. She left Mariehamn in Finland for a major refit before starting sailings as Anemos, serving the Cyclades, where ASL already run fast craft from Piraeus to Paros, Sifnos and Serifos, plus a variety of inter-island links. Rosella takes 1,530 passengers, with cabin berths for 720 plus space for 340 cars.

BEN-MY-CHREE Due to adverse weather in the Irish Sea, the 12,474gt Isle of Man Steam Packet vessel, built in 1998, lost Douglas-Heysham round trips on Thursday/Friday 29-30 December and on 3-4 January, before a third trip was lost on 12-13 January.

ISLE OF INISHMORE The 34,032gt vessel, dating from 1997, left the Irish Ferries cross-Channel service from Dover to Calais on 5 January and called at Zeebrugge for bunkers before continuing to Denmark for her annual overhaul. The company's remaining vessels, Isle of Innisfree (1992/28,833gt) and Isle of Inisheer (2000/22,152gt), were both forced to miss sailings from Dover on 19 January due to industrial action in France.

Silja Europa back in ferry traffic on the Baltic

After time in the Netherlands accommodating migrants and refugees, Tallink's Silja Europa is set for a return to Baltic passenger and vehicle services. JOHN PAGNI

TALLINK

After lying at Velsen-Noord in the Netherlands since September 2022 housing migrants and refugees, Tallink's largest vessel, Silja Europa (1993/59,912gt), is returning to service in the Baltic, operating between Estonia and Finland, but not before having her propulsion control system upgraded by Qtagg. The work is intended to reduce fuel consumption by six per cent and CO_2 emissions by 2,096 tonnes a year.

The new governor is to be installed in the engine room, replacing the existing Woodward control units for the four MAN diesel engines, which deliver 31,800kW for a speed of 21.5 knots. Silja Europa was ordered by Rederi AB Slite for Viking Line service as Europa, but the company went into liquidation.

Tallink/Silja Line stepped in and reached an agreement with German builders Jos L. Meyer of Papenburg for the vessel to be completed as Silja Europa, and she was put into service between Stockholm and Helsinki. Recent time in the Netherlands was not a first static role for the vessel, as she was in Australia as an accommodation ship from August 2014 until March 2016. Silja Europa can carry 3,123 passengers, with 1,194 cabins and more space for 400 cars, with loading via bow and stern ramps and doors.

Problems for northern routes

Earl Thorfinn (pictured) and sister Earl Sigurd brought ro-ro workings to Orkney Ferries each taking 190 passengers and 26 cars. NICHOLAS LEACH

ORKNEY FERRIES

The Orkney Island Council-owned ferry operation experienced problems in the opening weeks of 2023, with Shapinsay (1989/199gt), on the route from Kirkwall, needing a January trip to dry-dock after a propeller shaft seal failed. During her absence, a passengers-only service was supplemented by lift-on/lift off vehicle connections by 1990-built 771gt sisters Earl Sigurd and Earl Thorfinn.

Bad weather seriously disrupted services on 6 January, with sailings to destinations including Stronsay, Eday and Sanday cancelled, along with Rousay to Tingwall and a run from Kirkwall to Papa Westray. When Shapinsay, lengthened in 2011 by 6m to boost car spaces from 12 to 16 vehicles, returned to service, there was more trouble after she snagged a creel line and lost two trips on 12 January, with a Northerly Marine vessel taking foot passengers only while divers attempted to remove the line.

Graemsay (1996/90gt) was off service on 13 January for essential maintenance to take place, and with more storms expected there were cancellations on 17 January before forecast strong winds brought cancellation of a trip to Egilsay.

Boost for Fair Isle operations

SHETLAND-FAIR ISLE

A grant of £27 million from the UK Government Levelling Up Fund is being provided to finance a first roll-on/roll-off vessel for the service from Grutness, Mainland, Shetland to Fair Isle. The island is located 80 miles north of the Scottish mainland, halfway between Orkney and Shetland.

Emma Macdonald, leader of Shetlands Islands Council, was enthusiastic about the award, and commented: 'This investment will make a huge difference not just to the community of Fair Isle but to the whole of Shetland and we very much welcome it. There is still a lot of work to do but knowing we have the funding in place is a huge start.'

At present Fair Isle is served by the 1986-built passenger vessel Good Shepherd IV, which was built by J.W. Miller to carry just 12 passengers and takes vehicles by special arrangement.

▲ Good Shepherd IV in Lerwick; she was built by J.W. Miller & Son at St Monans, Fife, to carry 12 passengers. SYDNEY SINCLAIR/SHIPSPOTTING.COM

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A hybrid future for the ferry industry

TECHNOLOGY

◀ **An impression of Brittany Ferries' next E-Flexer, Saint-Malo.** Stena Line is developing the next generation of E-flexer vessels as dual-fuel methanol hybrids. The operator is working with engine manufacturers to convert the vessels, as well as develop the necessary port infrastructure.

The ferry industry is investing in environmentally friendly ships, and a total of 17 new ferries are due to enter service over the next few years, starting with Santoña, the latest E-Flexer.

The first day of March saw Brittany Ferries' third vessel from the Stena Ro-Ro -designed and -owned E-Flexer series, Santoña, begin sailings from England to Spain opposite 2021-delivered elder sister Salamanca. After the long delivery voyage from China and completion at the Jinling Weihai Yard, the new 42,000gt vessel went to Astilleros de Santander in Spain for final touches before a Brittany Ferries debut on sailings from Portsmouth to Bilbao and Santander.

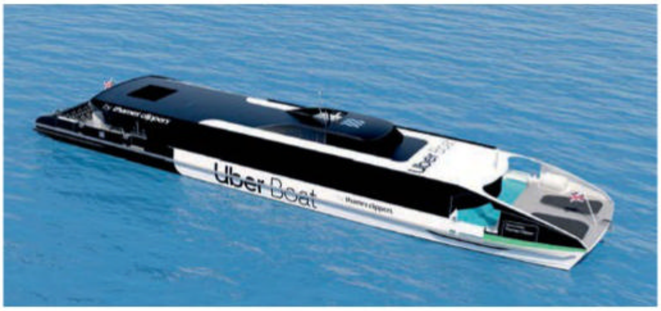
Brittany Ferries also have smaller E-Flexers 11 and 12 on order for delivery during winter 2024-25. They will replace fleet veterans Bretagne (1989/24,534gt) on the Portsmouth-St Malo route and Normandie (1992/27,541gt), sailing between Portsmouth and Caen/Ouistreham in France. The first vessel will be named Saint-Malo.

Santoña is fuelled by liquefied natural gas (LNG), which helps to reduce CO_2 output by about 25 per cent and also emissions that affect air quality. She is the latest ship for the industry, which has lately focussed on introducing fuel-efficient, hybrid-powered ferries to reduce carbon emissions and improve passenger experience. A further 11 such environmentally friendly ferries are dueby 2027.

The continued investment in new ships and improved port facilities underlines the industry's strategy to cater for an increasing number of passengers, as well as provide high-quality, efficient and green transport at good value.

Among other initiatives is the zero-emissions Belfast commuter service due to launch in 2024.

▲ **The proposed design for a new Isles of Scilly passenger ferry, Scillonian IV. The new 72m vessel will operate at a speed of 18 knots**



▲ **Uber Boat by Thames Clippers running in London will be able to run either on fuel/biofuel or electricity or a combination of the two. As well as producing fewer emissions, they are significantly quieter and offer a smoother ride.**

▲ **Artemis Technologie is to develop an electric ferry in conjunction with Condor Ferries. The EF-24 passenger ferry will run entirely on electricity and produces zero emissions**

Designed to fly above the water and use 90 per cent less energy than conventional ferries, the ship is being developed by the Belfast Maritime Consortium with Condor Ferries, which also plans a future electric ferry for the Channel Islands.

Further hybrid vessels are in development for routes operated by Brittany Ferries, Isle of Man Steam Packet, Isles of Scilly Travel, Caledonian MacBrayne and London's Uber Boat by Thames Clippers, which is set to launch the UK's first high-speed hybrid ferries this year. The vessels can either run on fuel/biofuel or electricity or a combination of the two.

Wightlink already operates a hybrid electric ship, Victoria of Wight, the greenest ferry to serve the Isle of Wight. To reduce carbon emissions by a further 7,500 tonnes per year, it is now aiming to launch the Solent's first all-electric freight and passenger ferry within the next five years. Similarly, all-electric vessels are in development by Caledonian MacBrayne.

Shore power ready, both Wightlink and Brittany Ferries plan for future vessels to be plugged in at port to recharge. The ferry operators' commitments coincide with Portsmouth International Port's investment in solar generation. It is the first UK port to install solar canopies: 2,600 panels sit above Brittany Ferries' car lanes, providing shade for the vehicles while generating power. Together with a 1.5MW/h battery to store unused power, the renewable energy project could contribute up to 98 per cent of the port's electricity consumption.

Efforts are under way to reduce emissions on the world's busiest shipping lane. P&O Ferries' new double-ender ships running between Dover and France, P&O Pioneer and P&O Liberté, allow for boarding and disembarkation at both ends to aid fast turn-around, improving economic and environmental efficiencies.

The new Isle of Man Steam Packet Co ship, Manxman, can carry approximately 50 per cent more passengers than the current ferry and features more cabins and a greatly enhanced passenger experience. In the south-west, the Isles of Scilly Steamship Group is working towards replacing its passenger ferry and freight ships. The new passenger ferry, Scillonian IV, would accommodate up to 600 passengers, increasing capacity by more than 20 per cent.

A new home for Ryndam after refit

Ryndam is set to get a new lease of life with Celestyal. WILLIAM MAYES

CELESTYAL CRUISES

Early in the Covid pandemic many ships were sold at knock-down prices, often for scrap, but some for further trading. Celestyal Cruises purchased Costa neoRomantica from Costa Cruises with the aim of putting her into service as Celestyal Experience. Unfortunately, that did not happen and the ship was soon resold for breaking.

Around the same time, a number of ships were acquired speculatively by interests connected with the Greek ferry operator Seajets, including three former Holland America Line ships, although one of those came via P&O Cruises Australia, and this ship will now join the Celestyal fleet as Celestyal Journey. It is not clear if this acquisition is intended to replace either of the company's existing vessels, Celestyal Crystal and Celestyal Olympia.

Celestyal Journey was built for Holland America Line by Fincantieri at Monfalcone for Holland America Line as Ryndam. She entered service in 1994 and served the company until she was sold in 2015 to sister Carnival Corporation company P&O Cruises Australia, being renamed Pacific Aria.

A sale to Cruise and Maritime Voyages (as Ida Pfeiffer) had been agreed, but with the demise of that company she was instead sold to the Seajets Group, renamed Aegean Goddess and laid up at various Greek ports. Now, she will undergo a $21 million refit in a shipyard close to Piraeus.

Earthquake relief in Turkey

MIRAY CRUISES

▲ Gemini is providing accommodation for earthquake survivors. POUL ERIK OLSEN (SHIPSPOTTING.COM)

Turkish operator Miray Cruises has reactivated its ship, the 1992-built Gemini (ex-Crown Jewel, Superstar Gemini), from winter lay-up to provide accommodation for survivors of the recent earthquakes which hit southern Turkey in the port of Iskenderun.

The ship had been in lay-up in the Turkish Black Sea port of Zonguldak, so took four days to get to Iskenderun, which is close to the border with Syria. Gemini is providing beds for up to 1,056 people, together with food and access to medical staff, with the arrangement in place until 15 March. MSC also has a ship at Iskenderun, the former Tirrenia ferry Aurelia, which currently bears the name MSC Aurelia.

Unexpected sale of Magica

COSTA CRUISES

Carnival Corporation's disposal programme continues, with the sale of Costa Magica to Seajets Group. This is the first of two further ships to leave the Costa fleet, which lost Costa Victoria and Costa neoRomantica during the pandemic, and more recently has seen Costa Venezia move across to Carnival Cruise Line (with Costa Firenze to follow) to become Carnival Venezia.

Additionally, the transfer of Costa Atlantica and Costa Mediterranea to the China State Shipbuilding Corporation/Carnival Corporation joint venture now styled as Adora Cruises was agreed prior to the shutdown. However, both of these ships remain laid up at Cyprus. Costa Magica, now renamed Mykonos Magic, is the first ship larger than 100,000gt to be sold by one of the big players to interests outside its own group.

Costa Magica is a Destiny class ship built by Fincantieri at Genoa and delivered in late 2004. She has a gross tonnage of 102,784 and a lower berth passenger capacity of 2,718, and it will be interesting to see what the future holds for this ship, which is less than 20 years old. Although not yet announced, could her sister, Costa Fortuna, be the other ship to leave the Costa fleet?

The 2004-built Costa Magica (102,784gt) is the first big ship to be sold outside its owning group. WILLIAM MAYES

NEWS IN BRIEF

MSC CRUISES The latest ship to join the fast-growing MSC Cruises fleet, MSC Euribia, will be named in Copenhagen on 8 June, after which she will begin a Northern European season based in Kiel and Copenhagen.

FORSEE CRUISES Forsee Cruises is a brand owned by Sanya International Cruise Development. In 2020 it acquired the 1998-built Sea Princess (ex-Adonia), which was renamed Charming. Now the ship has been renamed Dream and is undergoing a major refit at the Zhoushan Xinya shipyard, south of Shanghai.

SCENIC CRUISES The second of the company's yachts, Scenic Eclipse II, will sail from Lisbon on 13 April on her maiden voyage. The new ship will be named in Malaga on 3 June by NASA scientist Dr Kathy Sullivan.

ROYAL CARIBBEAN Steel-cutting for the second ship in the Icon of the Seas series began at the Meyer Turku shipyard on 15 February. The 250,000gt 5,600 lower berth passenger ship has yet to be named. She is due to enter service during 2025.

OCEANIA CRUISES The second of the pair of 66,000gt newbuilds will be named Allura when she enters service in spring 2025. She will carry about 1,200 passengers.

DREAM CRUISES The second of the recently built ships, World Dream, has finally been auctioned on behalf of the Singapore Sheriff's Office following the collapse of parent company Genting Hong Kong, with the buyer emerging as Cruise Saudi. The 2017-built 150,695gt ship was handed over on 28 February and has been renamed Manara.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

ROYAL NAVY Construction work on Warspite, the third Dreadnought class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN), has been set in motion with a steel-cutting ceremony at BAE Systems' Barrow-in-Furness shipyard, on 9 February. Construction of the first and second boats, Dreadnought and Valiant, is well under way, with the first-of-class now around 50 per cent structurally complete. Along with King George VI, the new boats will replace four Vanguard class SSBNs from the early 2030s on.

ROYAL NAVY HMS Anson departed the Barrow in Furness shipyard on 19 February for her homeport at the Faslane submarine base on the Clyde, from where she will conduct sea trials. Anson is the fifth of seven Astute class attack submarines. The remaining two boats are due for delivery by 2026. On 23 January a steel-cutting ceremony was held for the future HMS Active, the second Type 31 frigate. All five Inspiration class vessels are to be operational by 2028.

RAN Austal has delivered a fourth Evolved Cape class patrol vessel to the Royal Australian Navy. The 58m aluminium monohull ADV Cape Capricorn (317) joins Cape Otway (314), ADV Cape Peron (315) and ADV Cape Naturaliste (316) providing fisheries protection, immigration and customs enforcement operations, as part of the Australian Border Force. Cape Capricorn (318), the fifth of eight planned vessels to be in service by mid-2024, was launched in February 2023.

IRISH NAVY Crew recruitment and retention issues have forced the Irish Naval Service to lay up a pair of Róisín class OPVs. The move leaves four ships available to patrol the largest sea area in the EU. In January 12 patrols were curtailed due to a combination of staff shortages and bad weather. The number of naval personnel has fallen 25 per cent, with more sailors leaving each year than joining, citing low pay and too much sea time.

Double whammy for carrier

HMS Prince of Wales at anchor in the Solent following a shaft failure. MARITIME PHOTOGRAPHIC

ROYAL NAVY

The Defence Select Committee has been told that both propeller shafts on HMS Prince of Wales were defective. The revelation comes after an inspection of the port shaft found similar issues to those that led to the failure of components on the starboard shaft last year.

These caused significant damage to the shaft, the propeller and some superficial damage to the rudder, forcing the aircraft carrier to abandon a high-profile deployment to the USA and limp to Rosyth for repairs.

The cause of the shaft failure is likely to stem from alignment mistakes made during construction, as the fault has not been reported to have affected HMS Queen Elizabeth. Thus, both shafts are undergoing repair at the same dry-dock where the QE class carriers were assembled. The rectification measures are due to be completed by the spring, after which the ship will return to Portsmouth for further planned maintenance.

The end of the Typhoon era

RUSSIAN NAVY

The Russian Navy has decommissioned the last of six Project 941 Akula class nuclear-powered strategic ballistic-missile submarines, better known in the West by the NATO reporting name, Typhoon.

Although the first to be built, Dmitry Donskoy (TK-208) was also the longest-serving. This was due to her being modernised in 2002 and later converted again as a test platform for the Bulava-M ballistic missile system that equips the latest generation of Russian SSBNs.

With a dived displacement of 48,000 tonnes and with a set of 20 missile launchers, flanked by two main pressure hulls, encased by an outer hull, the Soviet-era leviathans were the largest submarines ever built. Their size and destructive potential encapsulated the Cold War and formed the basis of the novel, The Hunt for Red October.

As of today, three hulls have been disposed of with US funding, while two others, Arkhangelsk and Severstal, remain laid up at Severodvinsk, soon to be joined by Dmitry Donskoy.

▲ **The nuclear-powered strategic ballistic-missile submarine Dmitry Donskoy served the Soviet and Russian Navies for 42 years.** UNKNOWN

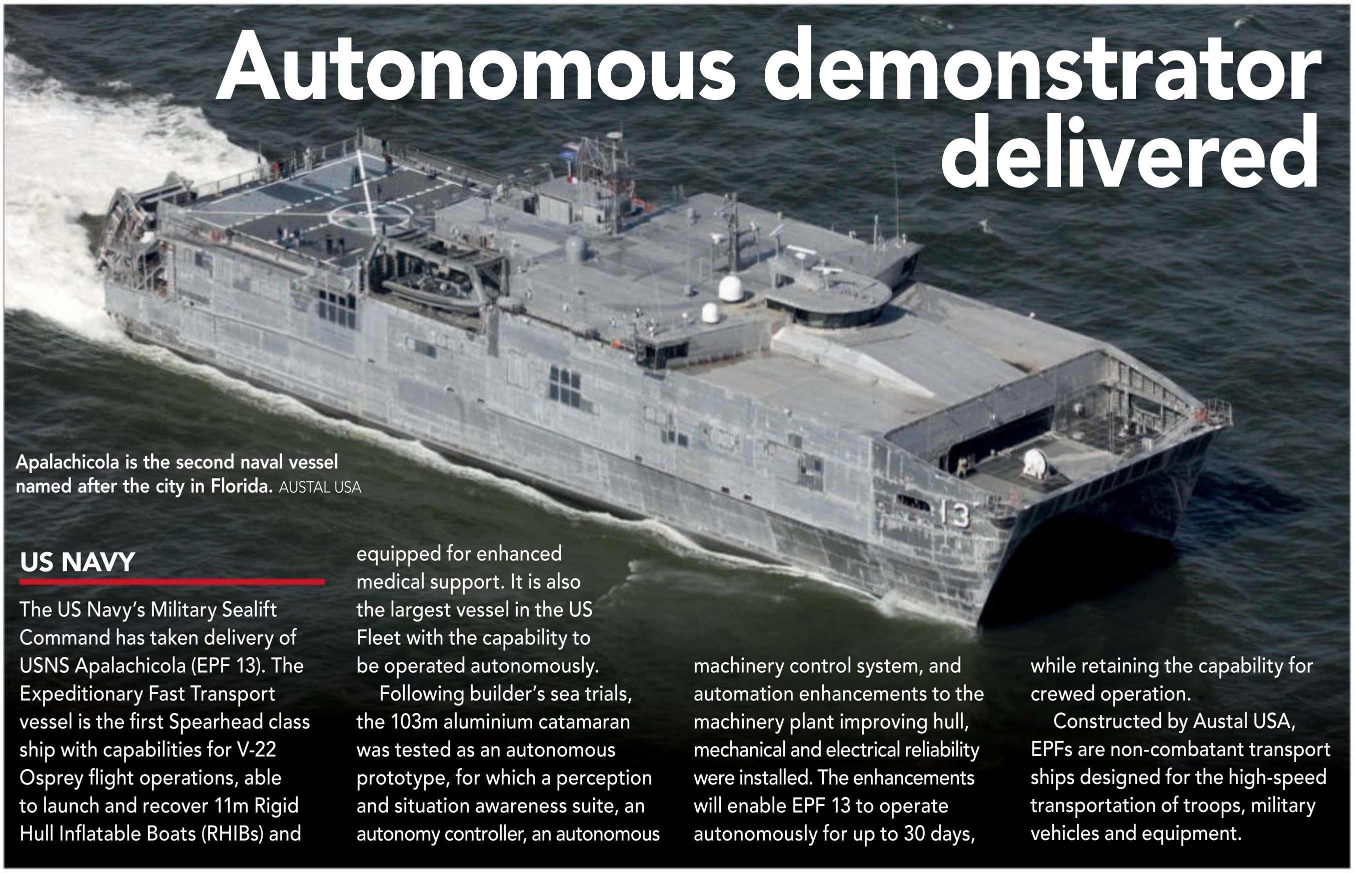
Carrier scuttled

BRAZILIAN NAVY

Brazil has controversially sunk the aircraft carrier at the centre of a dispute with environmental protection groups. The former São Paulo (ex-Foch) was scuttled in the Atlantic Ocean on 3 February, despite the threat of pollution affecting the marine food chain. According to Brazilian authorities, a site 350km off the north-west coast, with a depth of around 5,000m, was chosen to mitigate the impact on fishing and the environment.

Last year the ship was towed from Rio de Janeiro for scrapping in Turkey, but was turned away en route after Turkish authorities were alerted to the presence of undeclared of toxic materials on board. These were said to be tonnes of asbestos insulation and poisonous PCBs, which were still in common use on ships built in the 1950s. After several months under tow at sea, the hull was at risk of leaking, prompting the decision to go ahead with the controlled sinking.

Autonomous demonstrator delivered



Apalachicola is the second naval vessel named after the city in Florida. AUSTAL USA

US NAVY

The US Navy's Military Sealift Command has taken delivery of USNS Apalachicola (EPF 13). The Expeditionary Fast Transport vessel is the first Spearhead class ship with capabilities for V-22 Osprey flight operations, able to launch and recover 11m Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats (RHIBs) and equipped for enhanced medical support. It is also the largest vessel in the US Fleet with the capability to be operated autonomously.

Following builder's sea trials, the 103m aluminium catamaran was tested as an autonomous prototype, for which a perception and situation awareness suite, an autonomy controller, an autonomous machinery control system, and automation enhancements to the machinery plant improving hull, mechanical and electrical reliability were installed. The enhancements will enable EPF 13 to operate autonomously for up to 30 days, while retaining the capability for crewed operation.

Constructed by Austal USA, EPFs are non-combatant transport ships designed for the high-speed transportation of troops, military vehicles and equipment.

CAMM for Saudi Arabia

SAUDI NAVY

The Royal Saudi Naval Forces' upcoming US-built Multi-Mission Surface Combatants are to be equipped with the MBDA CAMM (Common Anti-Air Modular Missile) system for close-in and local-area air defence. The European SAM was selected ahead of the American Evolved SeaSparrow Missile (ESSM), which was slated to equip the ships at the time they were ordered.

Also known as Sea Ceptor, the state-of-the art missiles have a range of 25km and a speed of Mach 3. They are already in service on the RN's Type 23 frigates and will soon be fitted to the Type 26, Type 31 and Type 45s. The CAMM has also been selected by the navies of Brazil, Canada, New Zealand and Poland.

The MMSC is a more powerful variant of the US Navy's Freedom class Littoral Combat Ship and will be designated as a frigate. The contract for four ships, weapons outfit and an associated support package is worth US$11.25 billion.

The Lockheed Martin-designed MMSCs are being built by Fincantieri Marinette Marine. The first pair of ships are to be named Saud and Fahd. LOCKHEED MARTIN

Rapid Auxiliary acquisition force

Island Crown is to be renamed for her new RFA role. The Defence Equipment Plan 2022-2032 plans to deliver up to four MCM Logistics Support Vessels.

ROYAL FLEET AUX

The UK Ministry of Defence has taken delivery of a second offshore support vessel, acquired from the commercial sector in as many months. Island Crown was handed over at Devonport in January after being purchased from Island Offshore for £40 million. The ten-year old Norwegian-built ship will undergo military-use conversion work before entering service with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

The new platform will operate as a Mine Hunting Capability Operational Evaluation Vessel, essentially acting as a 'mother ship' for Royal Navy mine-hunting operations, with a range of uncrewed systems. These will include the joint Anglo-French Maritime Mine Counter Measures (MMCM) system and the Combined Influence Sweep (SWEEP).

The ship will be homeported at the Clyde naval base, where the Royal Navy's First Mine Counter Measures Squadron (MCM1), is also based.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

MAERSK DISSOLVING TWO BRANDS Denmark's Maersk Line, which is discontinuing its joint operation with the Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) in the 2M Alliance, will also discontinue the use of the Hamburg Süd and Sealand brand names, both to be 'transitioned' into the singular Maersk brand. Maersk acquired Hamburg Süd in 2017 and Sealand in 1999, although it retired the latter brand in 2006, only to revive it in 2015, after which three regional Maersk carrier brands, MCC Transport, Sealand and Seago Line, were combined under the SeaLand name. JS

TANKERS FOR VENEZUELA Venezuela's state-run energy company, PDVSA, is negotiating with Iran's Iran Marine Industrial Company (SADRA) for the construction of two Aframax tankers. SADRA has previously built two tankers for PDVSA, the 113,000dwt Arita (ex-Sorocaima, since renamed Colon) and Anita. The next two tankers, to be named India Urquia and India Mara, will cost $33.77 million each and may be paid for by oil shipped to Iran from Venezuela.

MPC BUYS TWO Norwegian shipowner MPC Containerships has acquired the 3,400TEU container ship Rio Centaurus and 2,800TEU feeder ship TRF Kaya for an en bloc price of $33.9 million, while selling the older 2,800TEU AS Carinthia for $7.6 million. The latter vessel was built in 2003, while the purchased ships, both coming with existing charters, were built in 2010 and 2007. The transactions bring the MPC fleet up to 63 vessels with a combined capacity of 137,094TEUs. JS

RO-ROS FOR CLdN South Korea's Hyundai Mipo Dockyard plans to deliver the first of two 8,000-lane-metre ro-ros ordered by CLdN during the fourth quarter of 2024 and the second quarter of 2025. Designed for shortsea trading, the vessels will operate on Northern and Western European routes. JS

Hapag-Lloyd to retrofit 100 ships

The 7,506TEU Ningbo Express, built in 2002, is one of the first Hapag-Lloyd ships to be refitted with a new propeller and bulbous bow, the work being accomplished at Dubai over a two-week period. A. LINDSTROM

COMPANY NEWS

Germany's Hapag-Lloyd, in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and meet the International Maritime Organization's target of reducing CO2 emissions by 40 per cent by 2030 compared to 2008 levels, is retrofitting 100 of its ships with new propellers and bulbous bows.

The drydocking programme, which will see slimmer propellers with fewer blades installed, along with bulbous bows maximised for slow steaming, will enable the vessels to lower their fuel consumption and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The new propellers will be supplied by Mecklenburger Metallguss in Waren an der Müritz, Germany and will be transported to shipyards in Portugal, Spain, Turkey, Oman, Singapore and China for installation as the ships are taken in for their regular drydockings.

At the same time, main engines will be adjusted to conform to the new efficiency level and rotational speed of the new propellers. JS

New wind turbine foundation installer delivered

WINDFARMS

China's CMHI Haimen Shipyard has delivered the DP2-rated heavylift vessel Les Alizés to Belgium's Jan De Nul Group, which will first employ the 236m by 52m ship to transport and install 107 monopile foundations and one offshore substation topside at Ørsted's Gode Wind 3 and Borkum Riffgrund 3 windfarms off the coast of Germany. The ship has been designed to transport ever larger offshore wind turbines.

The 61,000dwt Les Alizés has been specifically designed for the loading, transporting, lifting and installing of large offshore wind turbine foundations and features a deck loading capacity of 61,000 tons and a deck space of 9,300m² served by a main crane of 5,000 tons capacity. This allows the ship to transport several heavy foundations to the offshore installation site in one trip, which means there is a reduction of both fuel and emissions. JS

◀ Completed in China for Belgium's Jan De Nul, the 61,000dwt heavylift vessel Les Alizés has been specifically designed to transport and install very heavy wind farm monopile foundations. JAN DE NUL

Post-pandemic price drop

Matson Navigation's 50-year-old converted 'Trailership' Matsonia was one of only six container ships to be broken up last year. R. BELESKY

CONTAINER SHIPS

Ship demolitions are increasing and ship prices are beginning to fall as a wave of pandemic-induced consumer spending passes. Last year, demolition sales fell to their lowest levels since 2005, with only six container ships of a combined 10,904 TEU sold for dismantlement.

Among these was the last of the American-built 'Trailerships', the 50-year-old Matsonia, which was broken up in Texas, and the twin 1990-built feeders Mathu Bhum and Xetha Bhum, both sold for recycling in Bangladesh.

A weakening charter market and looming overcapacity brought about by a mid-pandemic ordering spree is expected to see over 350,000TEUs of capacity broken up this year. At the same time, prices for second-hand container ships for further trading have been falling off rapidly, with nearly six per cent of the global boxship fleet now laid up as freight rates and cargo volumes revert to pre-Covid levels.

This has seen ships such as the 2007-built, G Ace (ex-Hanjin Chittagong) of 2,553TEU capacity sold for only $13.7 million, while her sistership, ST Ever (ex-Hanjin Manzanillo), went for as much as $46.5 million just 12 months ago. JS

Ammonia-fuelled

BULK CARRIERS

Engine designer WinGD, now owned by the China State Shipbuilding Corp (CSSC), has signed an agreement with CMB.TECH, a division of Compagnie Maritime Belge (CMB), covering the development of an ammonia-fuelled two-stroke engine capable of powering a series of new 210,000dwt bulk carriers to be built in China in 2025-26. To operate under the Bocimar banner, the new bulk carriers will carry two ammonia (NH3) tanks at the stern, and piping carrying the fuel will be double-walled. JS

▲ **A series of ten 210,000dwt bulk carriers to be built in China for CMB of Belgium will make use of ammonia-fuelled two-stroke engines being developed.** CMB

Tailwind starts new service

▲ **The container vessel Solong, one of the three vessels to be deployed on Tailwind's new service, on the Thames sailing from Tilbury.** KRISPEN ATKINSON

FEEDER SHIPS

Hamburg-based Tailwind Shipping, the shipping arm of supermarket chain Lidl, has opened a new container service connecting Bangladesh to Europe. Named Tiger Express, the service boasts a fast transit time of 20 days between Chittagong and Barcelona. The service also calls at Moerdijk, inland of Rotterdam.

Aimed at the fashion and textile sectors, the service will be run by three 800-900TEU capacity feeder container ships. Tailwind Shipping was founded in July 2022 by the retail giant to carry non-food goods manufactured in China to its stores in Europe. The company currently operates an Asia to Europe service, named Panda Express, served by four container ships, ranging in size from 3,800 to 5,500 TEU. KA

Fisher extends charters

TANKERS

James Fisher Everard, which operates a fleet of product tankers from 3,000 to 35,000 metric tons in capacity, has extended a charter agreement for the product tankers Speciality and Clyde Fisher. The pair are owned by Singaporean-headquartered First Ship Lease, with the vessels bareboat chartered to the Barrow-based owner.

The contract for the 12,985dwt Clyde Fisher, which was one of a pair of sisters delivered in 2005, has been extended for two years. The charter for the smaller Speciality, delivered in 2006 and which joined the Fisher fleet after the company's acquisition of F.T. Everard the same year, has been extended by three years.

In total, First Ship Lease (FSL), the company which Fishers are leasing/bareboat chartering the ships from, own eight tankers, which are bareboat-chartered to the British tanker operator. KA

▲ **The 2006-built tanker Speciality on the Thames in 2020.** KRISPEN ATKINSON

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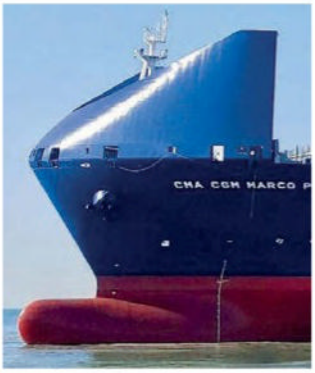
Fuel-saving

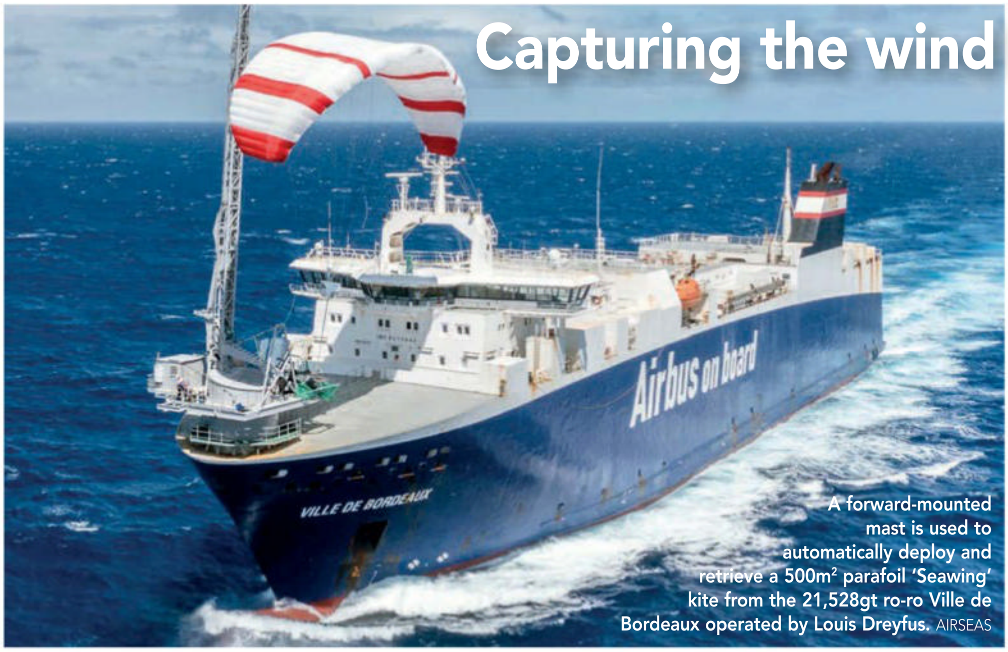
CMA CGM

French company CMA CGM is testing a 'windshield' on its 16,022TEU container ship CMA CGM Marco Polo to reduce fuel consumption and gas emissions. The use of such 'wind deflectors' was pioneered by Mitsui OSK Lines on its 6,724TEU MOL Marvel, and last year a similar device was fitted to Ocean Network Express' 20,150TEU ONE Trust (see SM, Jan 2023), giving a two per cent average CO_2 emissions reduction.



▲ **Mounted forward on the 16,022TEU CMA CGM Marco Polo, the experimental 'windshield' cuts both fuel use and emissions.** CMA CGM

Capturing the wind



A forward-mounted mast is used to automatically deploy and retrieve a $500m^2$ parafoil 'Seawing' kite from the 21,528gt ro-ro Ville de Bordeaux operated by Louis Dreyfus. AIRSEAS

WIND ASSISTANCE

Deployable kites have been used for auxiliary power on a number of ships over the past decade, but the biggest employed to date is a $500m^2$ parafoil 'Seawing' kite developed by Airseas of France and installed on Louis Dreyfus' 2004-built ro-ro vessel Ville de Bordeaux, used by Airbus to transport aircraft assemblies.

The Seawing system consists of a launching mast, trolleys, winches, storage pod and inflatable parafoil wing, all mounted on a ship's forecastle. The wing, which is connected to the vessel by an umbilical control cord and cable, is pulled out of the storage pod by the trolley system and inflated, then launched from the top of the mast, all automatically. Once airborne, it is controlled from the ship's bridge using a computer linked to an EcoRouting network which optimises the vessel's route according to weather forecasts. The next Seawing installation will be on a 210,000dwt bulk carrier being built for Japan's 'K' Line.

Hybrid and wind-assisted

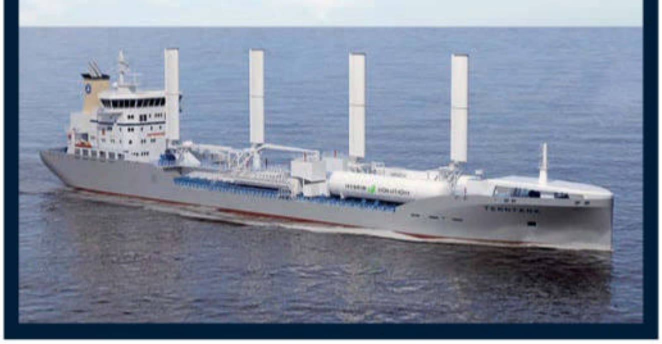
DUAL-FUEL TANKERS

Swedish tanker operator Terntank, which currently operates ten chemical/product tankers in the European shortsea market, expects to take delivery of two 15,000dwt hybrid dual-fuel tankers in early 2025 which will be both methanol and wind assistance-ready.

Designed by Kongsberg, the twin ships will be delivered with a power plant that uses marine gas oil (MGO) or Biofuel while being configured for the future use of methanol, as well as the mounting of four automated sails.

The vessels will be built by China Merchants Jinling Shipyard, Yangzhou, which has an option to build two additional tankers.

Twin hybrid tankers ordered by Sweden's Terntank will be both methanol- and wind assistance-ready, and will also be capable of using shore-based power while they are berthed. TERNTANK



ncl
Powered by Methanol
by Methanol

Twin 1,300TEU containerships being built in China for charter to North Sea Container Line (NCL) will be capable of operating on methanol. MPC

Methanol-fuelled twins for MCP

CONTAINER SHIPS

Oslo-headquartered MPC Container Ships expects to take delivery of two dual-fuel 1,300TEU container ships from China's Taizhou Sanfu Ship Engineering in the second half of 2024 that will be capable of operating on methanol as well as Marine Gas Oil (MGO).

The twin vessels, to be employed on 15-year time charters to North Sea Container Line (NCL), will also be equipped with shore power connections, battery packs, shaft generators and twisted-edge flap rudders to enhance overall operating efficiency.

The construction of the two ships, which will cost $39 million each, is being partially supported by the Norwegian NOx fund ($5.95 million) and Norway's Enova programme ($1.35 million).

Diesel-electric for Vertom

The diesel-electric multi-purpose ship Vertom Patty is to be followed by seven sisters produced by Dutch builder Thecla Bodewes for Holland's Vertom. VERTOM

MULTI-PURPOSE

The Netherlands' Vertom, a company named for its very first vessel, Vera Tomson, has ordered another two 7,000dwt diesel-electric-powered multi-purpose ships from compatriot builder Thecla Bodewes Shipyards, with completion by 2025. The order follows delivery of the first vessel of the LABRAX series, the 118m by 14.3m Vertom Patty, with sisters Vertom Cyta and Vertom Tomma to be handed over later this year and a further three hulls still under construction.

All eight ships will feature an optimised hull shape and box-type cargo holds to ensure maximum loading flexibility. In addition, their modular diesel/electric propulsion systems have been designed to take advantage of future fuels and all have the ability to convert to methanol/electric or hydrogen/electric propulsion when such systems become available.

New dual-fuel MSC boxships

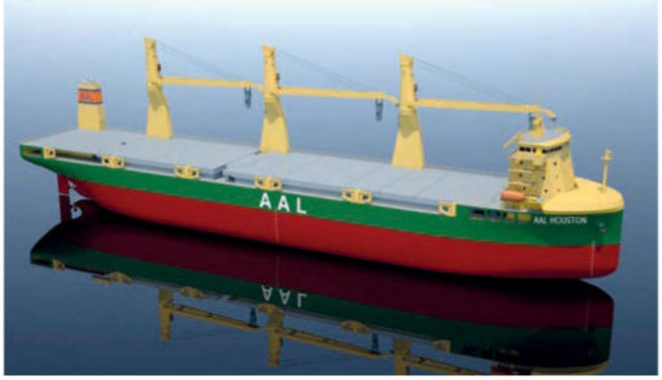
CONTAINER SHIPS

The Mediterranean Shipping Co (MSC) has ordered ten 11,500TEU dual-fuel container ships in China under a contract secured by Zhoushan Changhong, a joint venture between privately owned Jiangsu Xin Chang Jiang Group and state-owned China International Marine Containers Group (CIMC).

The vessels have been designed by the CIMC Ocean Engineering Design and Research Institute, and will measure 335m by 45.6m. They will be equipped with the largest C-type LNG fuel storage tanks in their class, which will enable a round-trip from China to Europe or China to the US in gas mode alone.

▲ **Geneva-based MSC has ordered ten dual-fuel 11,500TEU boxboats, to be built by China's CIMC ORIC.**

AAL's dual-fuel carriers



▲ **A series of six dual-fuel multipurpose ships to be built in Chna for AAL will feature three 350-tonne deck cranes and a house fully forward.** AAL

MULTIPURPOSE

Singapore-based AAL Shipping expects to take delivery of a series of six Super B class 32,000dwt multipurpose vessels from Chinese shipbuilder Guangzhou Wenchong for delivery between 2024 and 2026. The dual-fuel ships will be capable of running on methanol and will be fitted with three 350-tonne capacity cranes with a maximum combined lift of 700 metric tons between two adjacent cranes.

A service speed of 14.5 knots will be provided by methanol-ready MAN main engines of 7,380kW output supported by two 1,700kW and one 1,065kW auxiliary diesel generators. The ships will be delivered under the names AAL Antwerp, AAL Hamburg, AAL Houston, AAL Dubai, AAL Dammam and AAL Limassol, the last name in tribute to the port where AAL was established in 1995. Since 2009 AAL has been headquartered in Singapore.

OOCL new 24,000TEU giants

CONTAINER SHIPS

Hong Kong-based Orient Overseas Container Line (OOCL) has taken delivery of the 24,188TEU OOCL Spain from China's Nantong COSCO KHI Ship Engineering (NACKS) shipyard as the first in a series of six sisterships. Although the 399.99m by 61.3m container carriers surpass Evergreen's 24,004 TEU A class vessels in capacity, they rank behind the Mediterranean Shipping Co's recently delivered MSC Irina and MSC Loreto, which have a capacity of 24,346 TEUs.

Besides being OOCL's first vessel with a capacity over 24,000TEUs, the 228,000dwt OOCL Spain is also the first newbuilding delivered to the company in over five years and its first new ship since becoming part of China's COSCO Shipping Group. The new vessel will be employed in OOCL's Asia-Europe LL3 service, an 84-day round trip calling at 14 ports between Shanghai and Hamburg.

The size of OOCL's new 228,000dwt OOCL Spain, which has been fitted with above-deck cell guides for its entire length, can be gauged by the bulk carrier berthed forward of it. COSCO NANTONG

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Jim Shaw

Remembering the Canadian City Line

This year marks the 120th anniversary of the founding of the well-known Ellerman Lines, which went on as the Ellerman & Bucknall Steamship Company to form the short-lived Canadian City Line service in cooperation with its North American agent, McLean-Kennedy of Montreal, during the early 1970s. Both firms had maintained trade links with India, Pakistan and Ceylon prior to World War II, and the new line was to renew this link using conventional breakbulk tonnage sailing via South Africa, the Suez Canal having been closed by hostilities in 1967.

The Canadian ports were to be Montreal and Toronto, with Saint John, New Brunswick used during the winter months when the St Lawrence river was ice-bound. The principal eastbound cargoes were to be Canadian newsprint, wood pulp, machinery, asbestos, lead, zinc, copper and aluminium, while westbound cargoes were projected to be tea, coffee, cashews, coconut, burlap and other jute products.

To inaugurate the new service, three Ellerman & Bucknall conventional cargo liners were renamed and given new funnel colours. The first of these was the 1963-built City of Glasgow, a 10,018grt Sulzer-powered ship, which was renamed City of Ottawa in 1971. It was followed by the similar-sized 9,704grt City of Eastbourne and 10,242grt City of Sydney, which were renamed City of Toronto and City of Montreal.

All three ships received new funnel colours consisting of a white diamond framing a red maple leaf painted on a red background. They also flew a distinct house flag that carried three white diamonds on a red field, the centre one bearing a maple leaf flanked by a wing diamond on each side, a design similar to Ellerman & Bucknall's own banner.

▲ One of several Ellerman ships placed in Canadian City Line service during the early 1970s was City of Ripon, a 7,713grt cargo liner built by Vickers-Armstrong in 1956. TREVOR JONES ▼

ADDITIONAL SHIPS

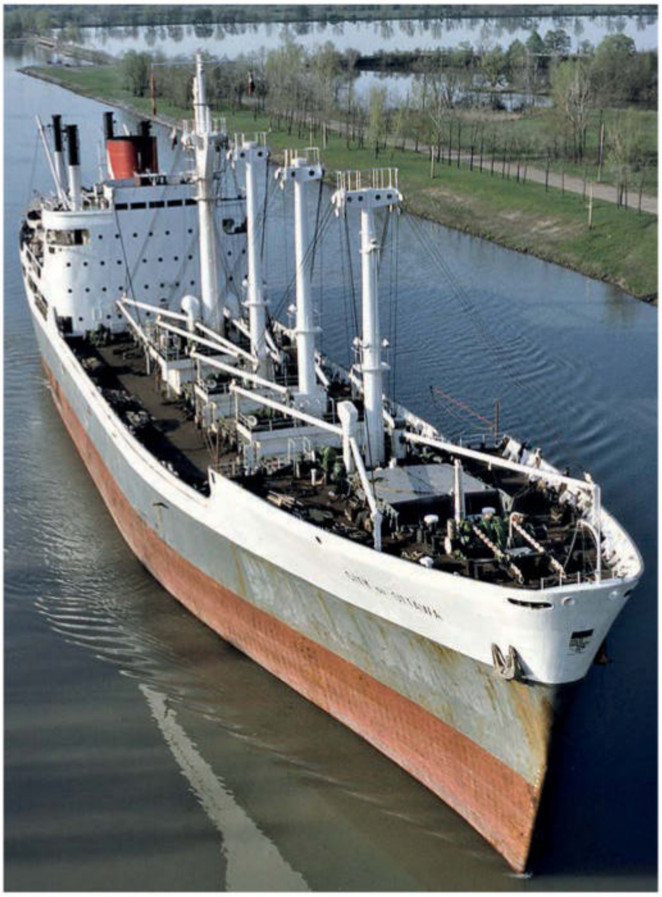
As the new service was expanded through the mid-1970s, other Ellerman & Bucknall ships were brought in, including City of Delhi, City of Hull, City of Guildford, City of Wellington, City of Newcastle, City of Colombo and City of Ripon. Some of these vessels received the new funnel colours, others did not, and none seem to have been renamed.

Unfortunately, the new breakbulk service did not last long and in 1977 City of Montreal was sold to the Panama-registered Hootan Shipping Company to become Yat Fei, the name under which she was broken up for scrap at Kaohsiung, Taiwan in 1979. City of Ottawa and City of Toronto were sold in 1978 to Singapore's Pacific International Line, taking the new names Kota Cahaya and Kota Cantik, and both survived until being broken up in China and Taiwan during 1984/85.

City of Delhi, which had been built in 1956 with the Canadian name City of Winnipeg, was dismantled in Bangladesh as Fexl Glory in 1980. Sistership City of Wellington was sold in 1978 and scrapped a year later as Eastern Enterprise. City of Ripon, yet another sister, was also sold in 1978, going to Ben Line Steamers as Benvannoch, before being dismantled at Kaohsiung in 1979.

City of Colombo also went to Ben Line, as Benmhor, prior to being sent to Kaohsiung in 1979 for demolition. City of Newcastle, which had operated for Ben Line in the 1960s as Benratha, was sold

CITY OF RIPON



▲ **The 10,723dwt City of Glasgow, a 1963 product of Vickers-Armstrongs on the Tyne, makes her way along Canada's Welland Canal after being renamed City of Ottawa in 1971. Later renamed Kota Chahaya, she was broken up in 1985.** BARRY ANDERSON

in 1978 to Venture Bay Shipping as Eastern Envoy before being demolished at Chittagong in 1981. City of Guildford, completed in 1957, was sold in 1979 to trade under the names Eurydice, Mighty Spirit and Nirav, before also being dispatched to Chittagong.

The relatively new City of Hull, a 1970-built SD-14, was sold off to other owners in 1980 to trade under the names St John, Seagull, Sea Lady and Magdalena before being broken up for scrap at Alang, India in 1996, the last of the group to survive.

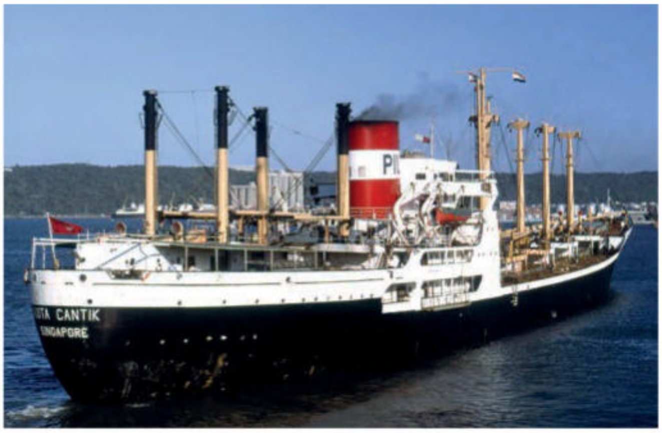
NAME DISAPPEARS

The end of the short-lived Canadian City Line service was followed by the gradual disappearance of Ellerman itself. Although the firm had become one of the first British shipping companies to become involved in containerisation through its membership in the Associated Container Transportation (ACT) Group in 1966, it was forced to consolidate its remaining conventional lines under the Ellerman City Lines banner in the early 1970s.

In 1983 the company was purchased by the Barclay Brothers, who re-formed it as Ellerman Holdings, with the remains of the shipping business then sold back to its original management team in 1985. Two years later, what was left of Ellerman was acquired by Trafalgar House and merged with its Cunard subsidiary to trade as Cunard-Ellerman.

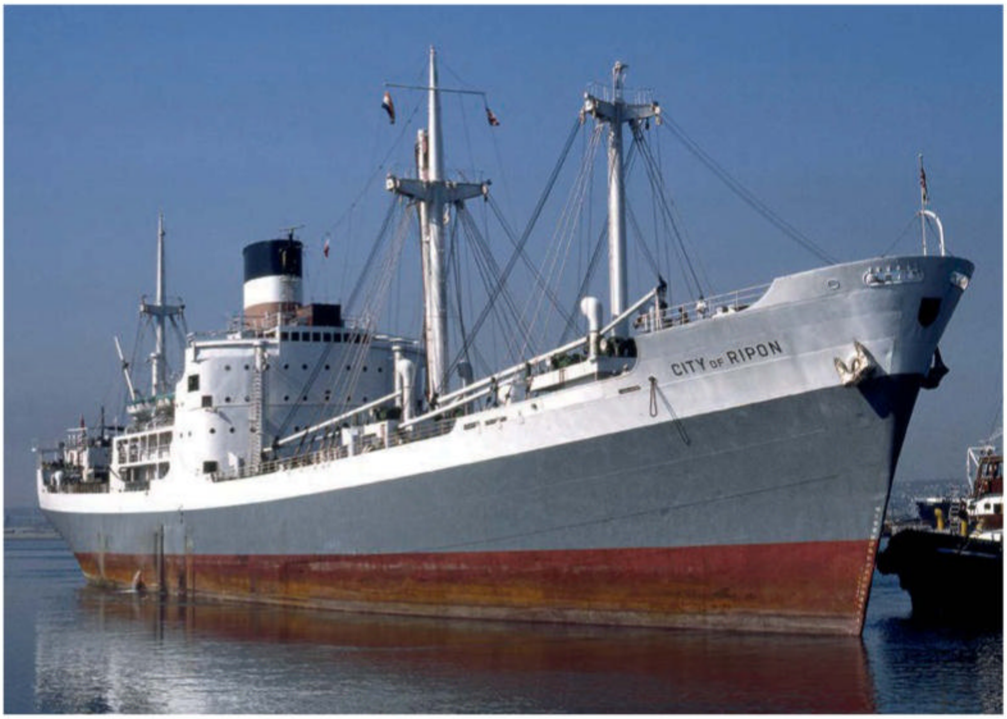
In the early 1990s, in a rather complicated arrangement, P&O bought most of the Cunard-Ellerman container interests, although Pacific operations under ACT were traded to Blue Star Line, while Andrew Weir Ltd took over the company's remaining Mediterranean, India and Africa businesses.

The Ellerman name was retained for several of these trades, but in 2003 ownership was passed on to Hamburg Süd, after which the Ellerman name was dropped and Ellerman Lines ceased to exist. However, the marketing name 'Ellerman City Liners' was applied to a new container service linking Shanghai and Tilbury introduced by Essex-based UniOcean Lines in 2021 and continues in use.



▲ **The former City of Toronto in the funnel colours of Singapore's Pacific International Line as Kota Cantik following her sale in 1978, after which she traded for another six years prior to being dismantled at Kaohsiung in 1984.** TREVOR JONES

▼ **Seen in her original Ellerman & Bucknall funnel colours, the Doxford-powered City of Ripon was sold to Ben Line as Benvannoch after the end of her Canadian City Line service in 1978, only to be broken up at Kaohsiung a year later.** TREVOR JONES



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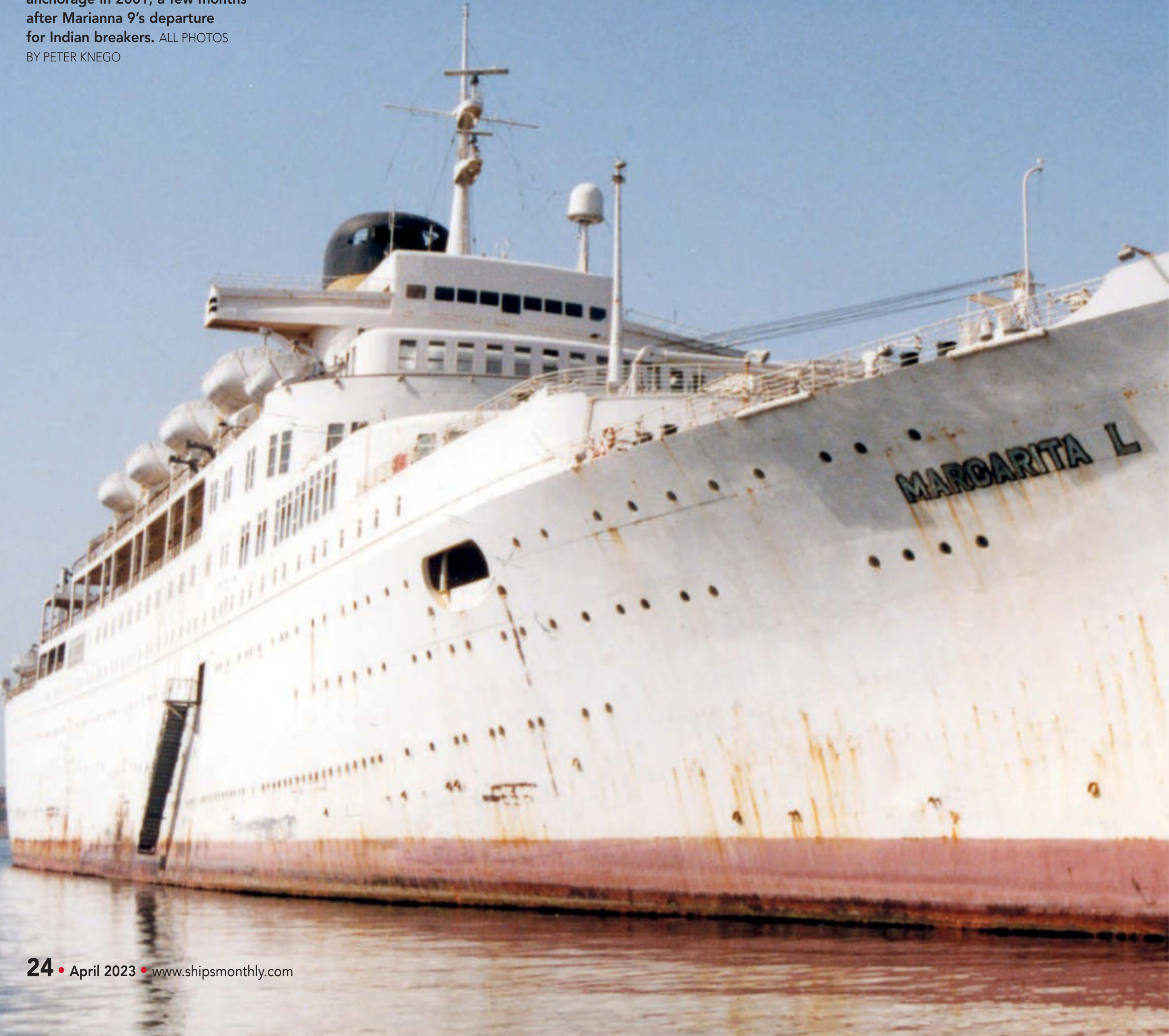
UNION-CASTLE'S LAST

A FINAL VISIT TO WINDSOR

Peter Knego remembers visiting Margarita L, the former Union-Castle liner RMS Windsor Castle, 25 years ago, in late 1998, when the ship was languishing in the Bay of Eleusis.

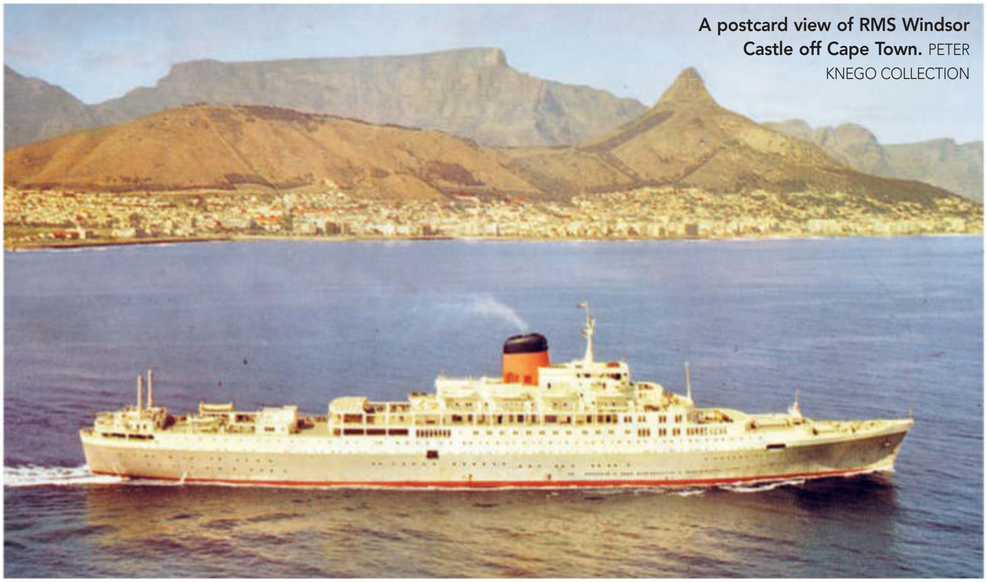
In the early morning of 14 December 1998 we were riding in a taxi to the port of Petrola, an industrial enclave filled with oil refineries at the northern end of the Bay of Eleusis. Once there, we boarded a private launch that took us out to Margarita L, the former Union-Castle liner RMS *Windsor Castle*, and my dream of gaining access to this historic vessel was finally coming true.

The ship, laid up in the anchorage since 1991, had just been placed on the sales list after the health of her nearly 90-year-old owner, Greek billionaire John S. Latsis, had begun to decline. Through



Margarita L at her lonely Petrola anchorage in 2001, a few months after Marianna 9's departure for Indian breakers. ALL PHOTOS BY PETER KNEGO

LINER CASTLE



A postcard view of RMS Windsor Castle off Cape Town. PETER KNEGO COLLECTION

the offices of a shipbroker, I was granted permission to document the ship in the hope of helping to get her sold for preservation in a static role.

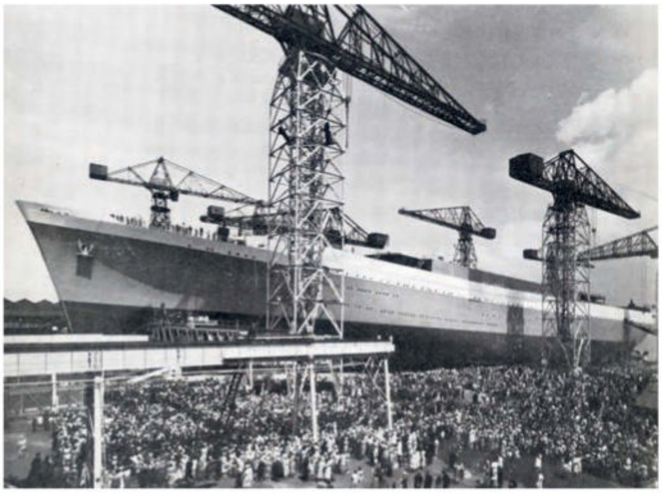
As we headed out to the ship, on our port side the Latsis-owned *Marianna VI* (ex-*Aureol*) and *Europe* (ex-*DFDS England*) comprised a small but fascinating raft. I asked the captain if we could circle the former Union-Castle liner before boarding. *Margarita L* was tied up with *Marianna 9*, the former Portuguese liner *Principe Perfeito*.

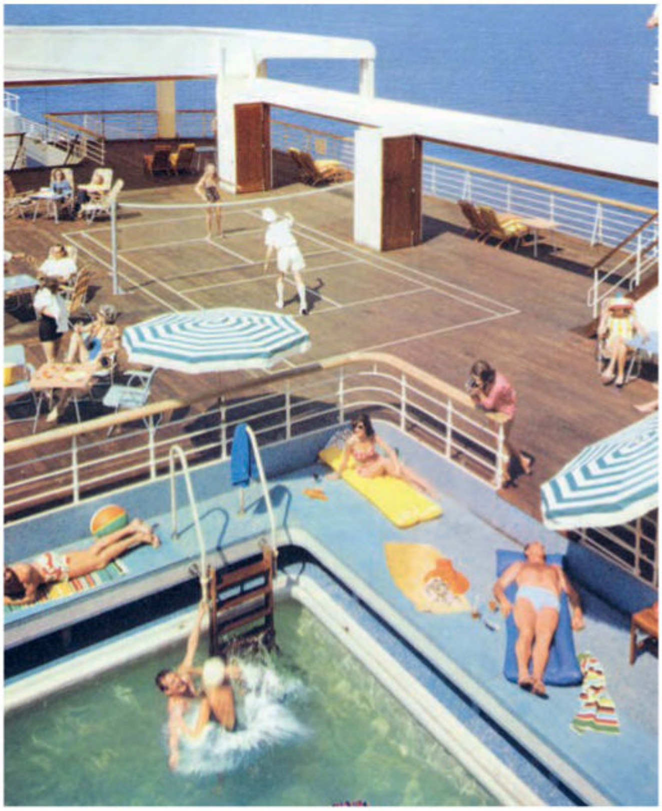
Named for Latsis' two daughters, both ships were beginning to show signs of superficial neglect, with rust and bird droppings streaking their length, but there was no denying each exemplified classic early 1960s British shipbuilding. The 19,393gt 1961-built *Marianna 9* was constructed by Swan Hunter, Wigham Richardson on the Tyne and had a low, sleek profile, with a raked bow, domed midships funnel and terraced afterdecks.

Margarita L towered over her fleetmate and looked far larger than her size, thanks to her long, towering bow and stepped-up forward superstructure. She was built by Cammell Laird at Birkenhead and launched by HM Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother on 23 June 1959. While her career with Union-Castle was painfully short, the ship was nonetheless considered one of the most glorious of any of Britain's mid-20th century ocean liners.

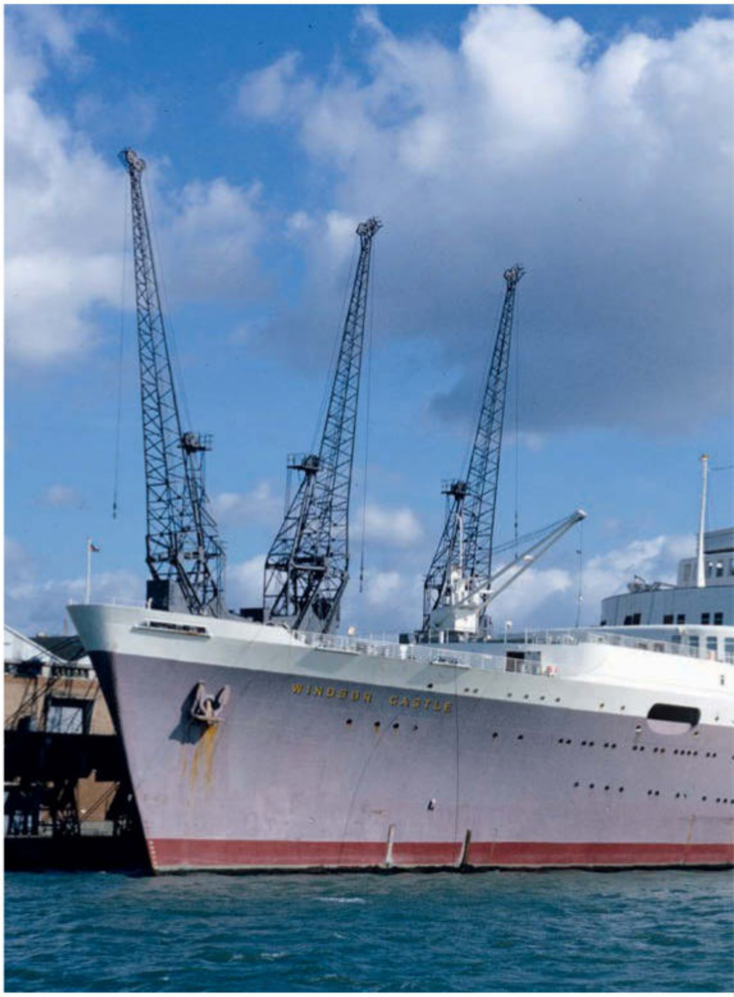
Windsor Castle's maiden voyage from Southampton to Durban commenced on 18 August 1960. At 37,640gt and 783.5ft in length, she was the largest liner ever built for the South African run and, with her Pametrada turbines producing

▼ **Crowds look on as RMS Windsor Castle is launched at Cammell Laird's shipyard at Birkenhead, 23 June 1959.** PETER KNEGO COLLECTION

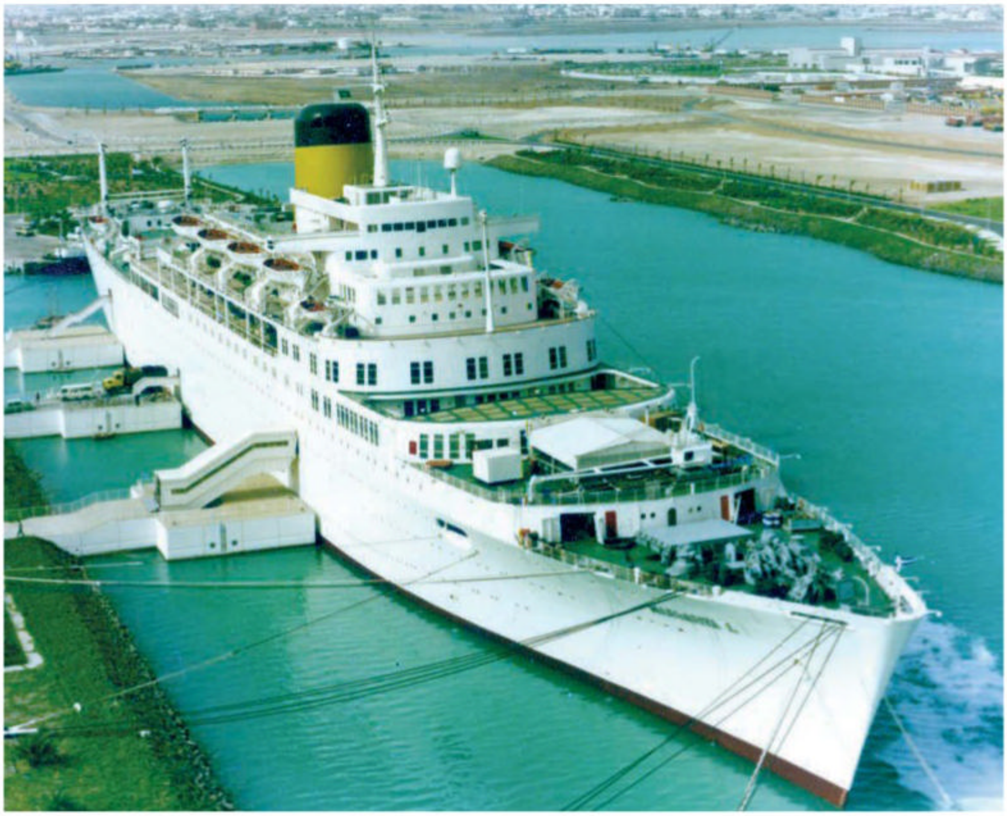




▲ **A brochure image of the Windsor Castle's First Class Lido and games deck.** PETER KNEGO COLLECTION



▶ **A stunning view of RMS Windsor Castle at Southampton, October 1970. When completed in 1960, the new ship was notable for the high standard of her public rooms in a 'traditional' first class and 'contemporary' tourist class configuration** PETER J. FITZPATRICK



▼ **Margarita L looking resplendent in her role as an accommodation ship at Rabegh.** PETER KNEGO COLLECTION

49,400shp to drive twin screws, one of the fastest, at 22.5 knots. As built, she carried 191 First and 591 Tourist class passengers and 475 crew.

With the rise of jumbo jets and containerisation, *Windsor Castle* and her fleetmates were rendered obsolete by the mid-1970s. The flagship of the line made the last official Union-Castle passenger-carrying round-trip sailing on 12 August 1977. Upon her return to Southampton, she was sold to John S. Latsis, who used her as an accommodation ship for Muslim pilgrims at Jeddah and later as housing for oil refinery workers at Rabegh. In 1991 she was laid up at Petrola and occasionally used by her doting owner for private functions.

GOING ON BOARD

When we reached the long gangway I had so often observed from a speeding tender, I grasped its metal

rail in disbelief. With my companion Mike, the watchman and the ship's captain, I climbed up to the reception area on C Deck. From there, we took a functioning lift to A Deck, where we stowed our extra camera gear and film in the Almond Blossom Suite.

Wary of the weather deteriorating, I wanted to get the outer deck areas completed so we could concentrate on the interiors by the time the anticipated storm was in full swing. From the top of the house, I watched as Mike scaled the radio mast to get some spectacular photos overlooking both *Margarita L* and *Marianna 9*. After so many years in limbo, the green painted decking was looking weathered, but the decay was mostly just cosmetic.

The first drops of rain began to fall while we were on the bridge wings. We worked our way down from there to the base of the funnel for views over the former First Class Lido and then further down, via the sheltered and open games deck areas to the fully encircling, teak-lined Boat Deck and the finite, sheltered promenades on Promenade Deck.

From aft A Deck, we documented the weathered Tourist Class Lido, the Tourist Class Veranda Café and the Tourist Class Children's Playroom with its built-in steamboat play area. Once at the fantail, we then worked our way forward to her fo'c'sle, where one of the original *Windsor Castle* bells still proudly presided.

With the generators providing additional light, we started our interior documentation at the wheelhouse, a museum-worthy space, with all of its original brass instruments and control panels. In the chart room there were diagrams and plans with RMS *Windsor Castle* stamped on them. In the captain's quarters, where her Greek master waited as we continued our photographic pursuits, there were ornate plaster mouldings and rosewood furnishings. In the chief engineer's cabin, I marvelled at some of the maple-framed furnishings and stacks of Union-Castle era log books and plans. I also noticed wool P&O blankets that had been destored from the former liners *Strathmore* and *Stratheden* (later *Henrietta* and *Marianna Latsi*), which were scrapped in the late 1960s.

The watchman with the keys to the First Class Lounge and Library was not on duty, so we had to wait until the following morning to access those spaces. However, the rest of the First Class rooms on Promenade Deck were opened up for us, from the rebuilt Smoking Room on the port side to the still original Drawing Room, rotunda-shaped Writing Room and the rather odd Verandah Cafe, which opened onto the First Class Pool via a large wood and glass screen. This last space boasted a perplexing combination of

MARGARITA L

ORIGINAL NAME Windsor Castle

BUILDERS Cammell Laird & Co Ltd, Birkenhead (hull no.1287)

TONNAGE 37,640gt as built; 1967: 36,123gt; 1972: 36,277gt; 1979: 25,697gt; 1994: 38,376gt

DIMENSIONS 783.5ft by 94ft

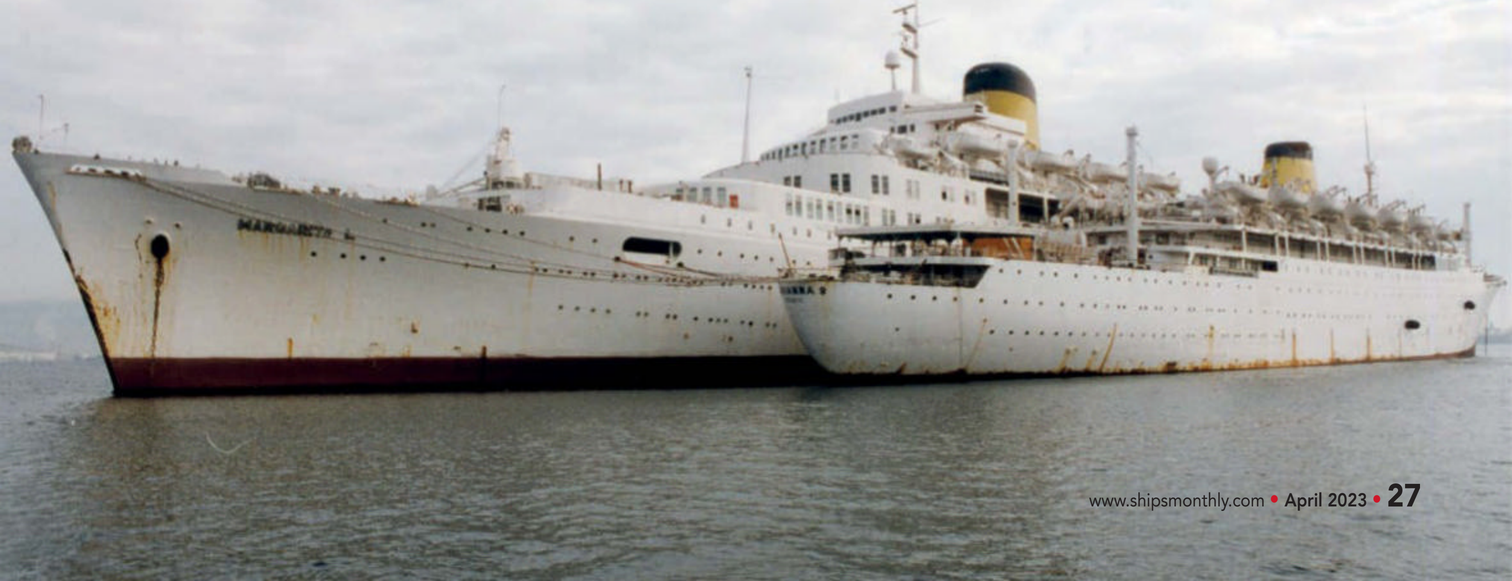
PROPULSION Geared turbines, twin screw, total power 49,000shp

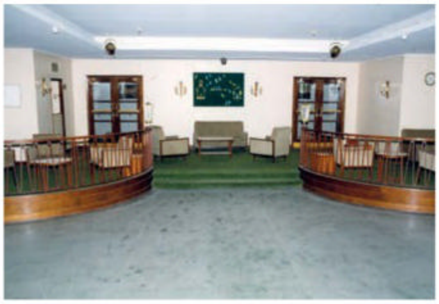
SPEED 22.5 knots (23.5 maximum)

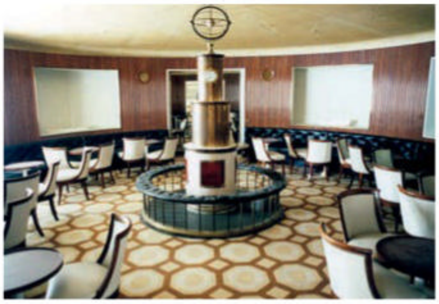
CAPACITY 1960: 782 (191 First class; 591 Tourist class); 1979: 852

ENGINES Two Pametrada turbines; twin screw

Margarita L and Marianna 9 at Petrola, 14 December 1998.




▲ The former Tourist Class Lounge, in an aft-facing view, pictured in 1998.


▲ The Tourist Class Rotunda still boasted its original features, pictured in 1998.

▲ Most of the de luxe cabins on A Deck were still in their original configuration, pictured in 1998.

original and brightly-coloured modern furnishings.

On A Deck, we visited the handsome Tourist Class Lounge with its windows facing the Tourist Class Games Deck and sporting a sunken dance floor in its centre. Melamine-topped, brass-framed tables featured three different bird motifs. The tables tied in with the miniature aviary, a scaled-down version of the Lin Tissot Murano glass aviary that was originally in the First Class Lounge.

Tourist Class public spaces continued aft on the port side, with the Library, Writing Room and the Tourist Class Smoking Room. This latter, rotunda-shaped space was most interesting, with its bronze centrepiece that resembled a combination of an astrolabe and a hookah, with the Camelopardalis constellation painted into the ceiling recess above. In each corner, there were ship models and, just aft, the Smoking Room bar area had a lounge with seating and a tavern-like bar with faux street lamps.

Meanwhile, the starboard portion of this deck was dedicated to the top 13 First Class suites, including the Almond Blossom, where we had stowed our belongings. These spacious staterooms had bedrooms and sitting areas, large windows and custom soft fittings that corresponded to their designated names, which included Peony, Red Rose and Golden Pheasant.

On B Deck, we visited some former First Class cabins, which, aside from a bit of dust, were mostly made up and looked almost ready to receive guests. Farther aft, there were some Tourist Class cabins with multiple berths and a sink, with showers and toilets down the hall. The First Class Entrance was home to the Reception, a few shops and a beauty parlour. Further aft, there was also the Cinema.

At the bottom of the forward staircase on D Deck, the First Class Dining Room came to life with the flick of a light switch, revealing its original checkered linoleum decking, wooden furnishings and spindly chandeliers. A private dining room used for special events during the Union-Castle era, and for Mr Latsis' private functions in later years, was accessed from the Dining Room's port side.

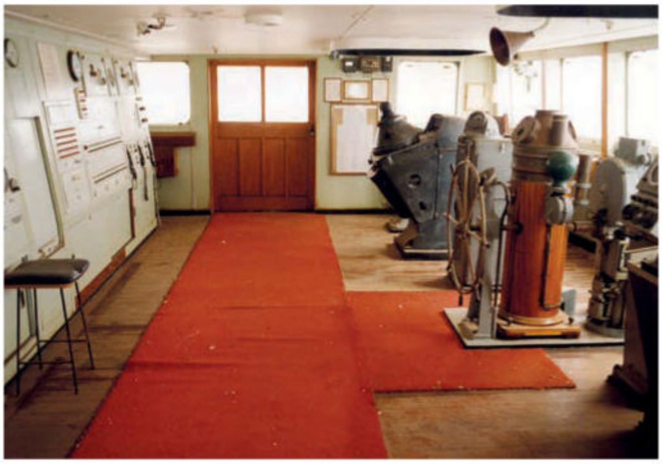
We worked our way aft through the galley to the Tourist Class Dining Room, which was also unaltered from its Union-Castle era. A large painting by British artist Sidney Smith dominated that room's aft bulkhead. Depicting a Classical Roman scene in Dali-esque style, the painting was painstakingly restored in 1990 by an artist named Dario Faller. This was quite possibly the most important work of art on the ship. Our visit came to an end when the approaching tender blew its horn.

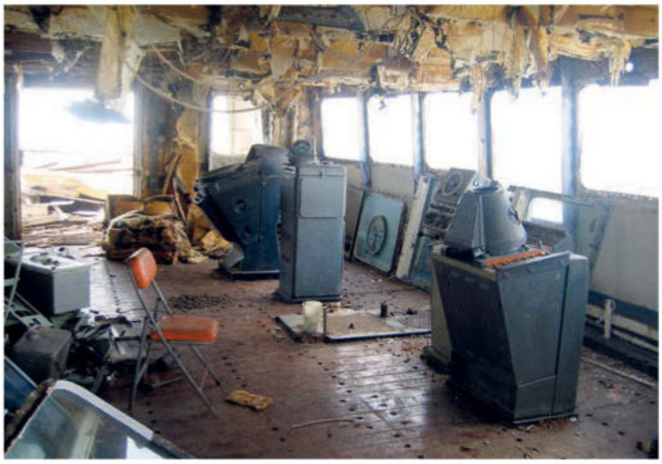
Early the following morning, we returned to *Margarita L*, first to visit the blandly rebuilt First Class Lounge, the Library and then the vast machinery spaces. The engine and boiler rooms, stabilisers and even the twin shaft areas were photographed before we crossed over a short jury-rigged gangway to *Marianna 9*, which we spent the next hours documenting.

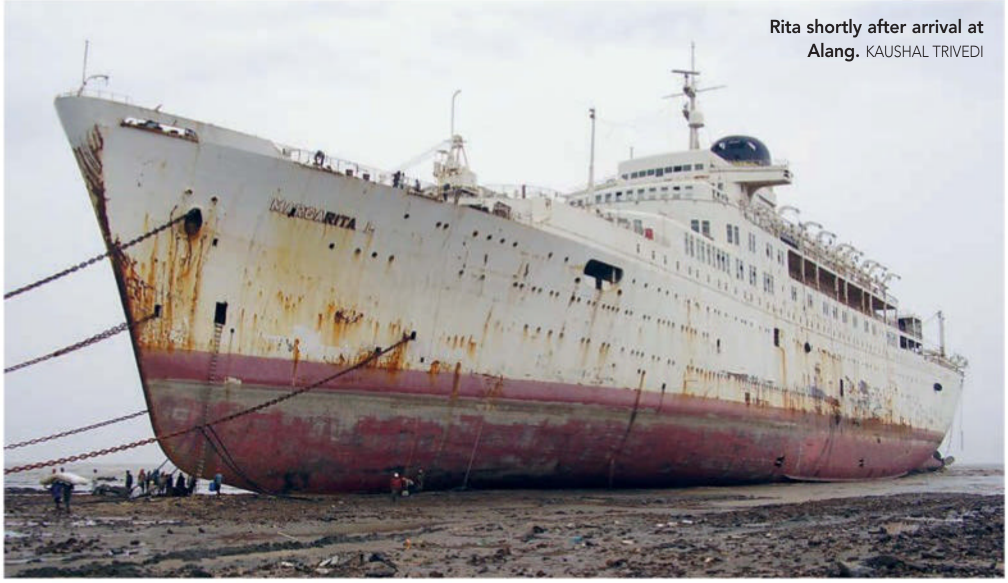
BROKEN DREAMS

When I returned to *Margarita L* three years later she was still languishing at Petrola but was now alone since *Marianna 9* had departed for shipbreakers in India. In those three years, more decay had set in, and there was even some ingress of water and mould to her interior. She was still intact and well worth preserving, but unfortunately a campaign to bring her back to the UK as a hotel ship went nowhere and, after another two years, in late 2004, she was sold for scrap.

With the delivery name *Rita*, the ship left Petrola under her own power in April 2005, but when scrap prices dropped drastically, she was ordered to anchor off Kalba in the UAE. When steel prices improved and it was time to sail to India, her engines could not be started,


▲ The wheelhouse was virtually unchanged from the Union-Castle era in 1998.


▲ Rita's stripped-out wheelhouse when the ship was being broken at Alang.



Rita shortly after arrival at Alang. KAUSHAL TRIVEDI

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so a tug was called. With *Rita* under tow, the tug broke down and finally limped to the beach at Alang, where both vessels were driven ashore for scrapping in July 2005.

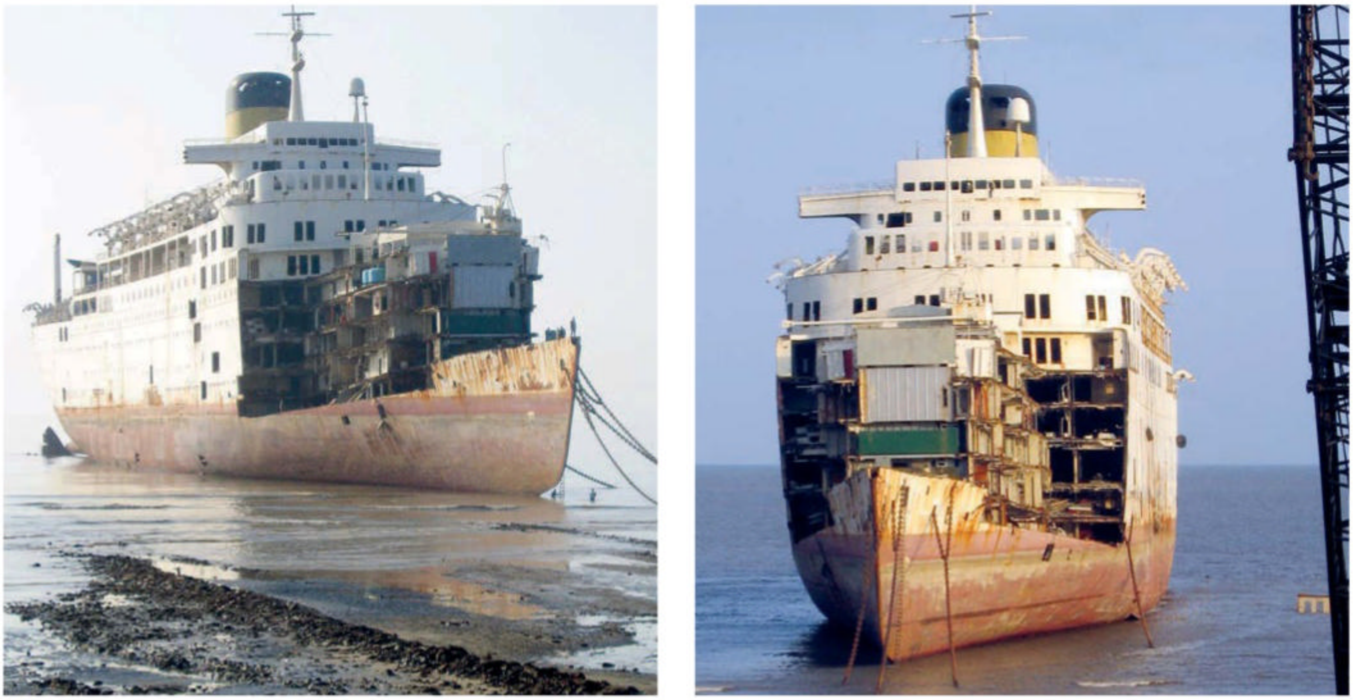
I made my third visit to Alang in September 2005 to rescue fittings and furnishings from *Margarita L*. When I arrived, the demolition was well under way, with her bow and stern missing and most of her interiors stripped. I spent an afternoon on board in search of anything that might have been left behind, thoroughly bewildered that this beautiful ship had remained so perfectly intact, only to be torn apart.

As workers pried away her teak decking and prepared a huge section of her aft/starboard hull to be cut down, I wandered her ravaged spaces in search of anything salvageable. Sadly, despite my efforts, the Sidney Smith painting in her Tourist Class Dining Room was scratched and was ultimately destroyed.

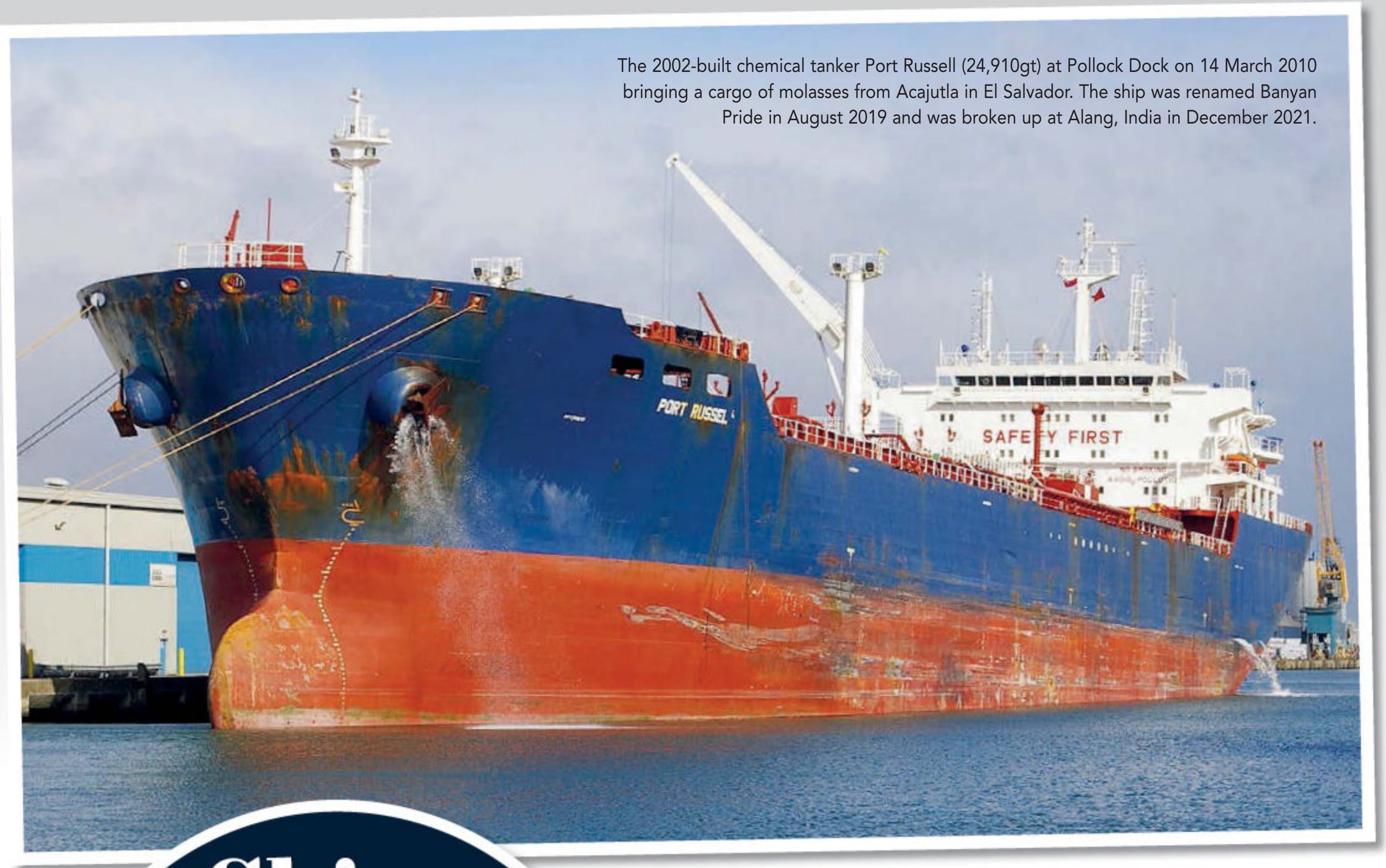
After an exhausting and desperately sad final visit, I headed ashore to see what was left in the breaker's stores. Even more distressing were the many furnishings and items like light fixtures and bakelite telephones that were haphazardly covered under tarps that were no match for the monsoons that summer.

Almost everything was ruined by rain water or mould, but I did manage to extract a few treasures and filled a 40ft container with items obtained from the breaker and the local traders' yards. Demolition proceeded ferociously and by January 2006, when that container of fittings arrived at my Southern California home, the former RMS *Windsor Castle* had ceased to exist. SM

For more classic ships, visit MidShipCinema, Peter Knego's YouTube channel, where there is a video about this visit and coverage of new and old cruise ships: youtube.com/user/midshipcentury.



▲ Latsis Lines sold Margarita L in December 2004 to an undisclosed party, with the view to disposing of the vessel to Indian scrap merchants. After some time was spent reactivating long idle main engines, the vessel sailed to India on 14 April 2005 under the shortened name Rita. The ship's last voyage under steam was from Piraeus, Greece to Alang via Port Said, the Suez Canal and Aden. By September 2005, the demolition of RIta was well under way at Alang.



The 2002-built chemical tanker Port Russell (24,910gt) at Pollock Dock on 14 March 2010 bringing a cargo of molasses from Acajutla in El Salvador. The ship was renamed Banyan Pride in August 2019 and was broken up at Alang, India in December 2021.

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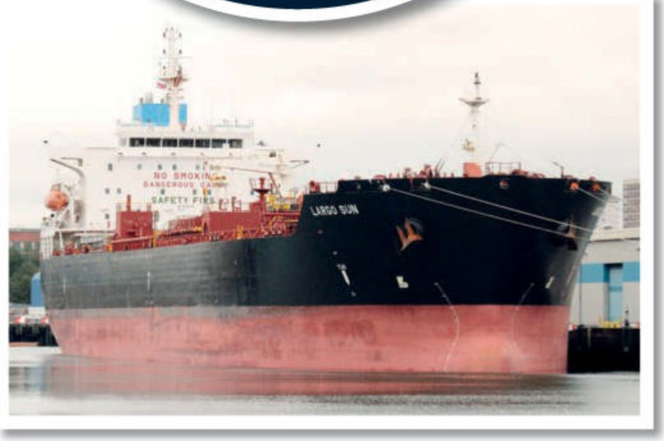
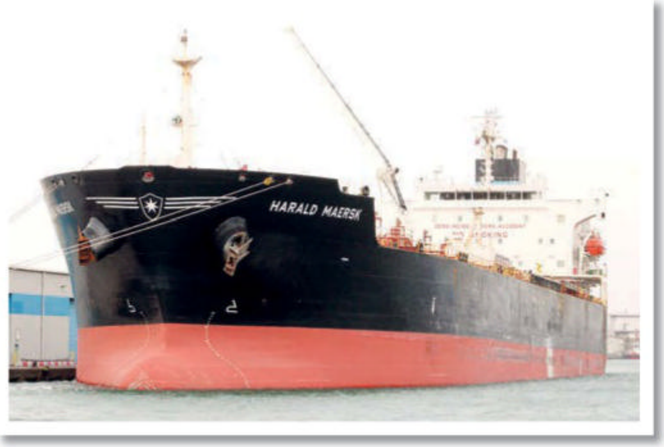
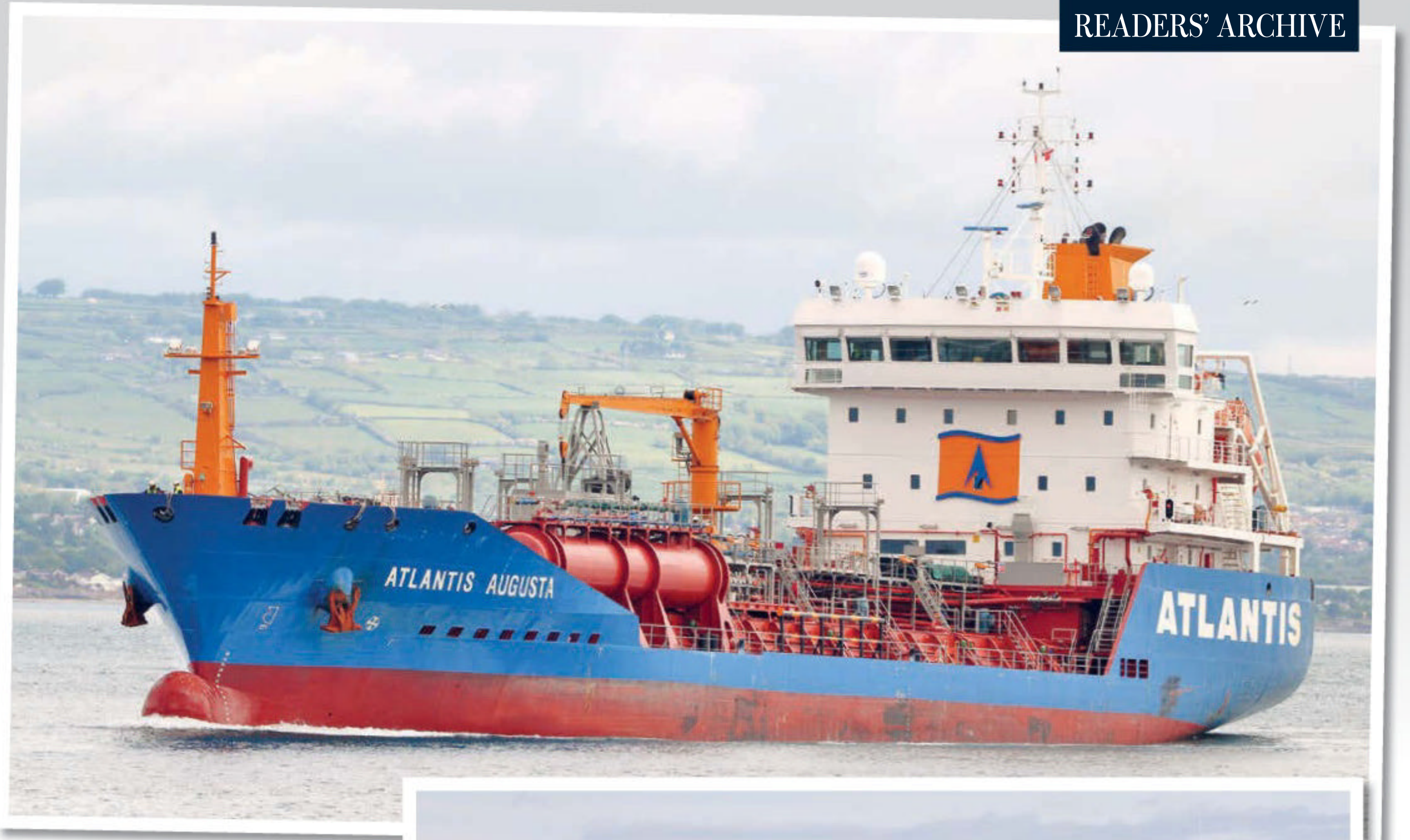
Belfast Harbour is the major maritime hub for Northern Ireland, handling 67 per cent of the counry's seaborne trade. A wide variety of ships use the harbour, with tankers large and small being among the regular callers, as Belfast handles over 80 per cent of Northern Ireland's imports of petrol, diesel and home heating oil. Roy Thompson's photographs show some of these vessel which have called at the port in recent years.

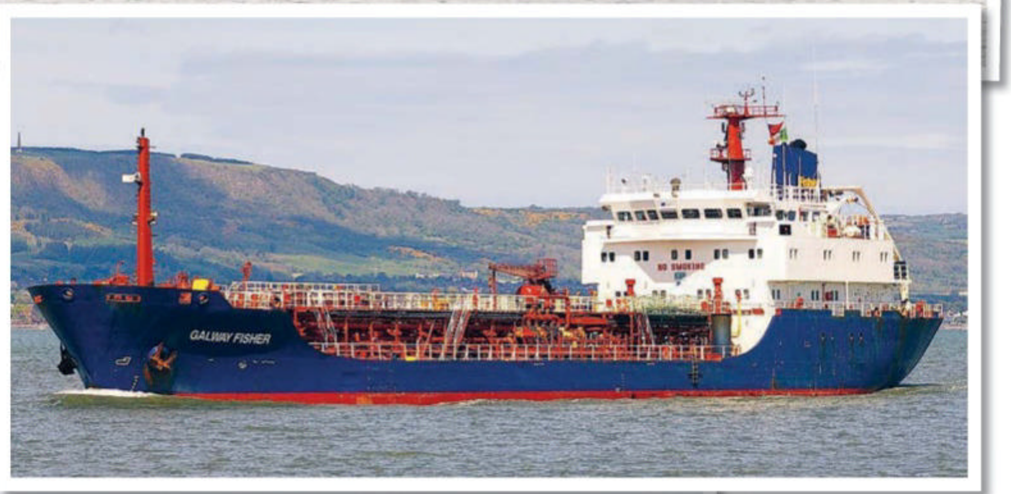


▲ **LARGO SUN** • The 29,767gt Liberian-flagged Largo Sun (2016) at Pollock Dock 6 on 13 September 2021, having brought a cargo of molasses from India.



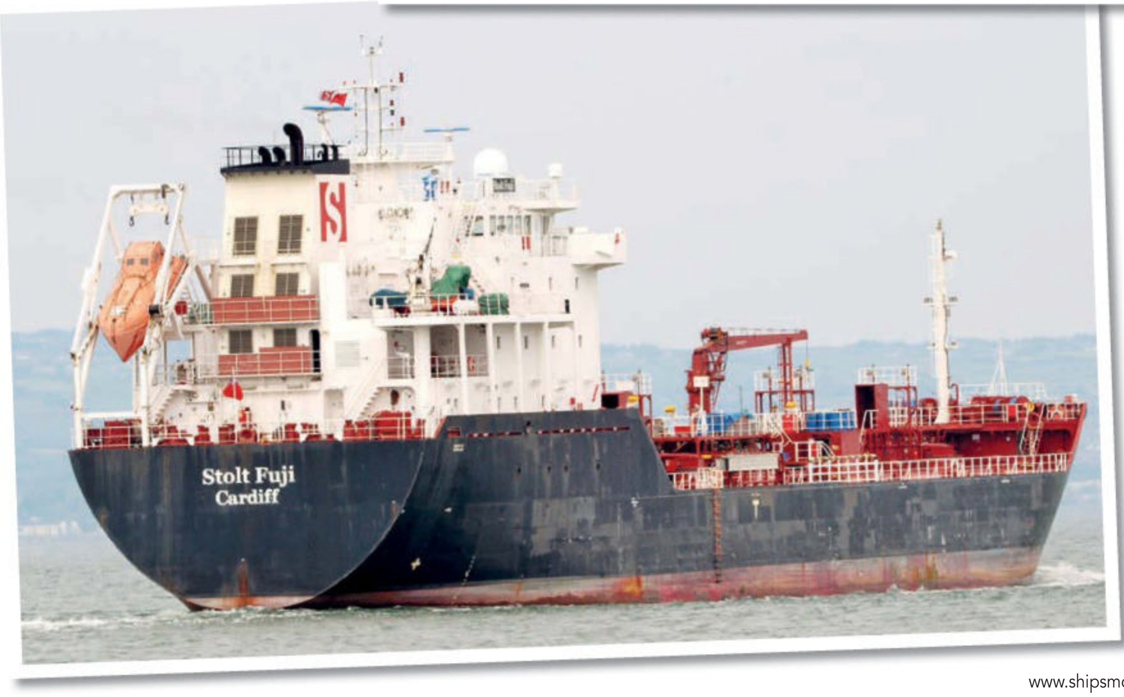
▲ **HARALD MARSK** • The 25,709gt Herald Maersk at Pollock Dock on 1 November 2020. She brought a cargo of molasses from Angre port in India.





▲ **ATLANTIS AUGUSTA** • The 2007-built Atlantis Augusta heading up the Victoria Channel at the entrance to Belfast harbour on 27 May 2019, inbound for oil berth 1, bringing a cargo of ethanol from Rotterdam via Dublin.

▶ **GALWAY FISHER** • James Fisher Everard's 1997-built tanker Galway Fisher in the Victoria Channel on 5 May 2012, inbound for oil berth 1 with a cargo of kerosene from Milford Haven. JFE sold the ship in September 2020 and she was renamed Endo Sirocco, now sailing under the flag of Cyprus.



◀ **STOLT FUJI** • The 2010-built asphalt/bitumen tanker Stolt Fuji at Victoria Channel on 4 June 2018 outbound from oil berth 2. She was carrying a cargo of bitumen from Eastham on the Manchster Ship Canal. She is owned and managed by Rotterdam-headquartered Stolt Tankers.

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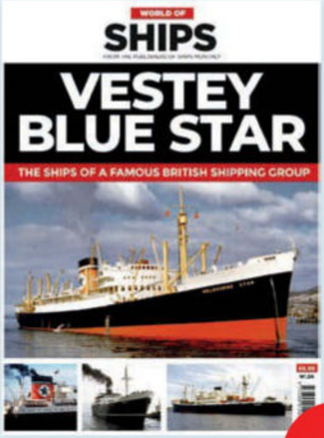
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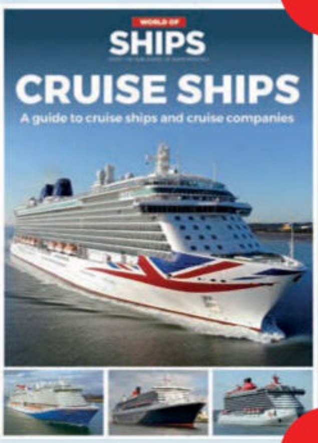
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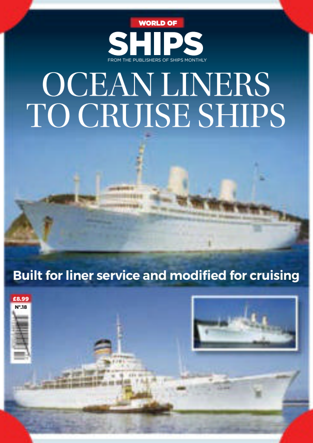
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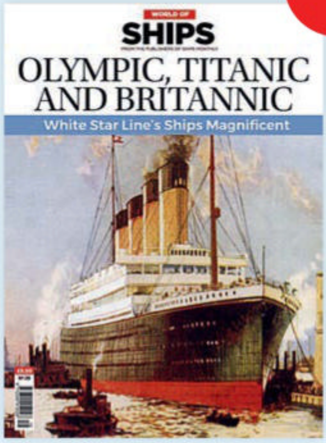
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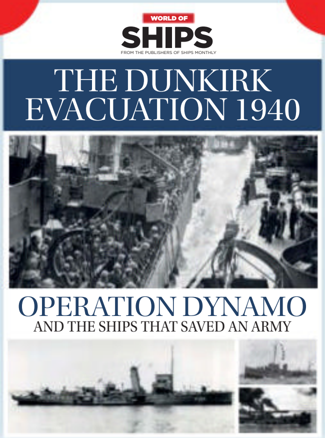
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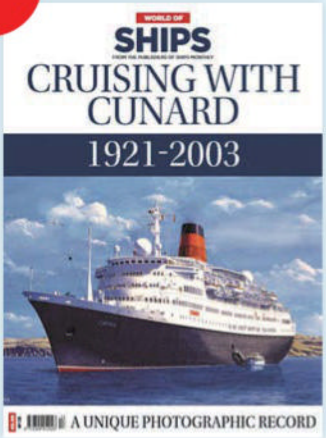
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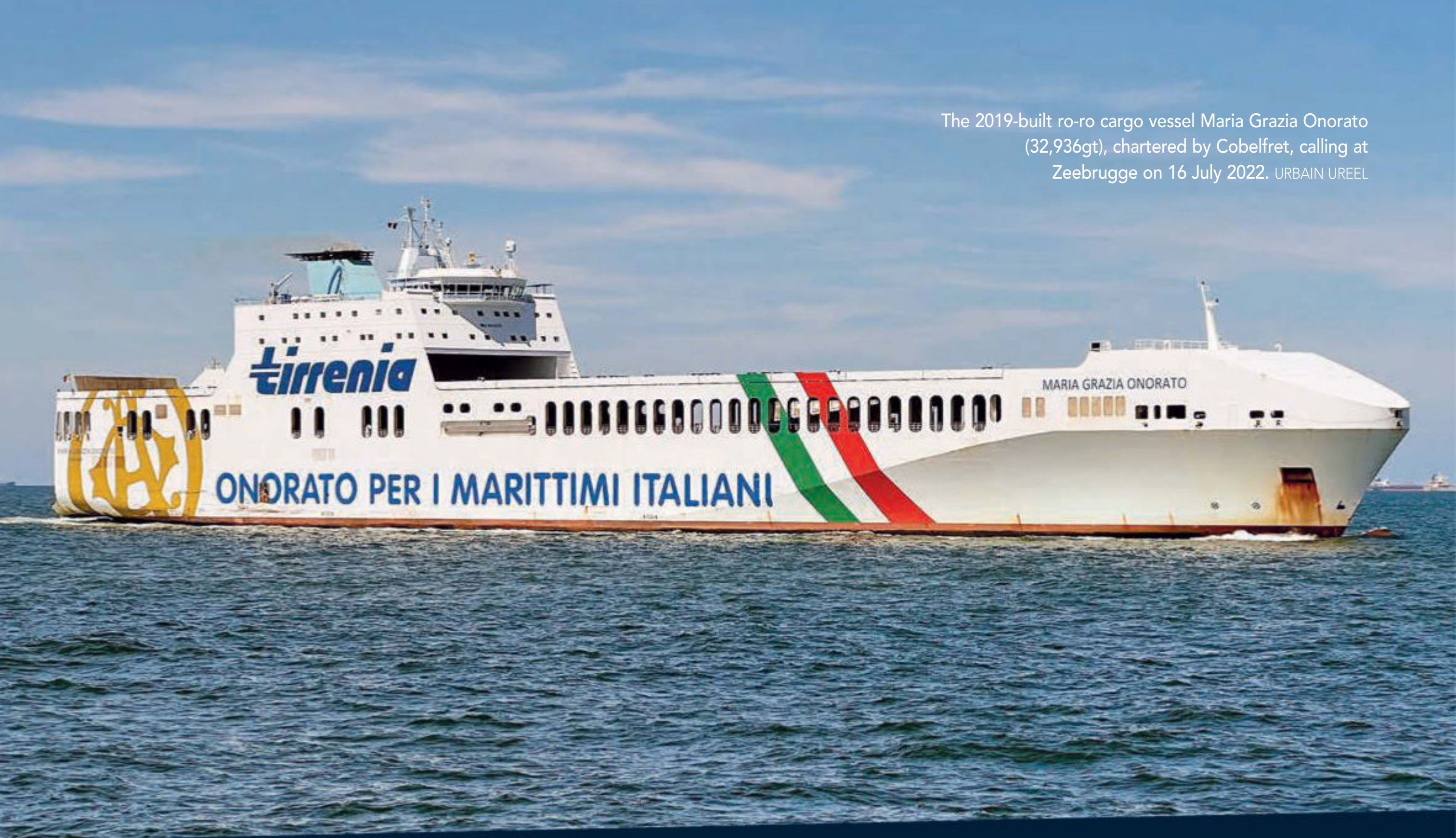
tirrenia
ONORATO PER I MARITTIMI ITALIANI
MARIA GRAZIA ONORATO

The 2019-built ro-ro cargo vessel Maria Grazia Onorato (32,936gt), chartered by Cobelfret, calling at Zeebrugge on 16 July 2022. URBAIN UREEL

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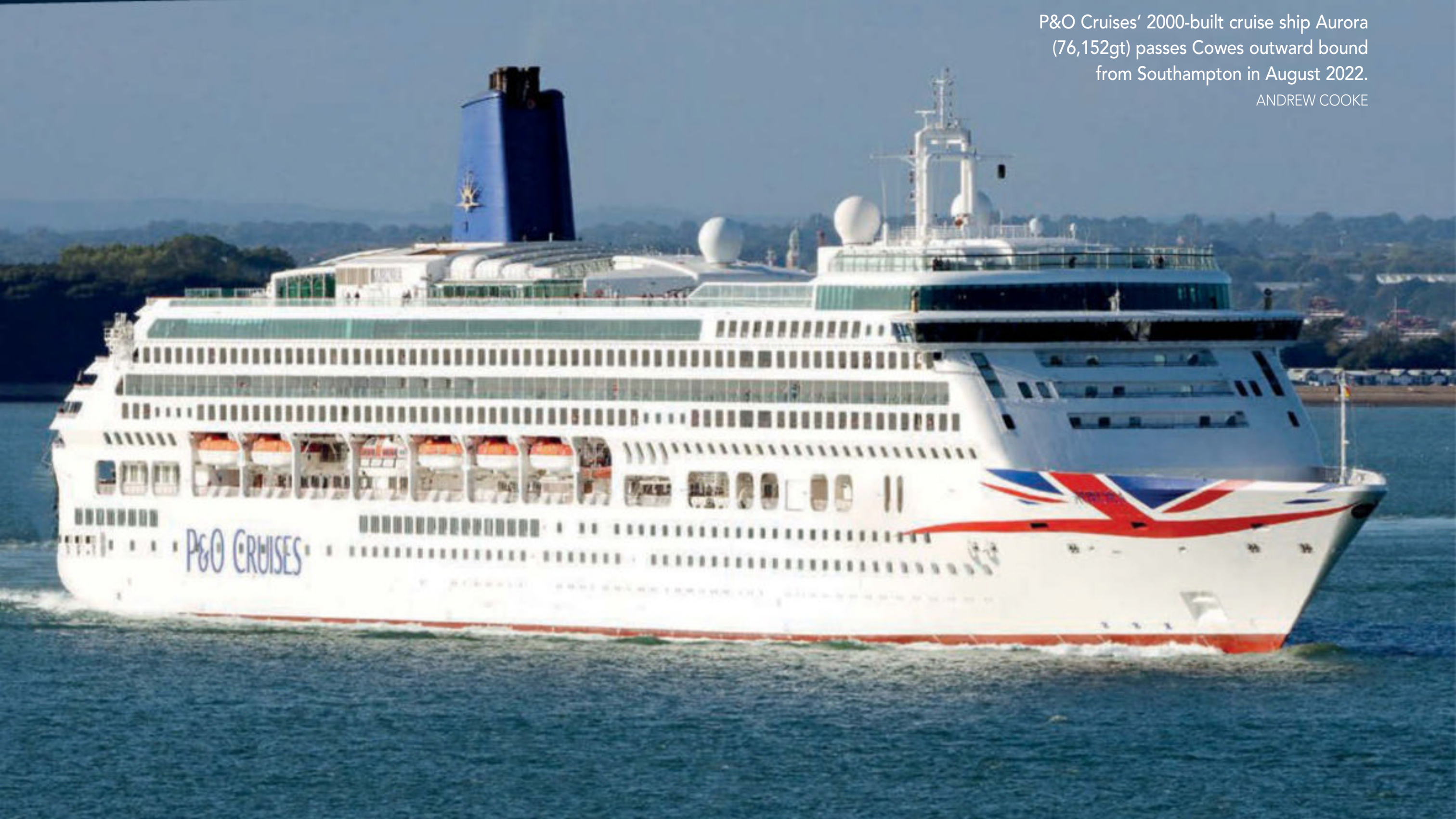
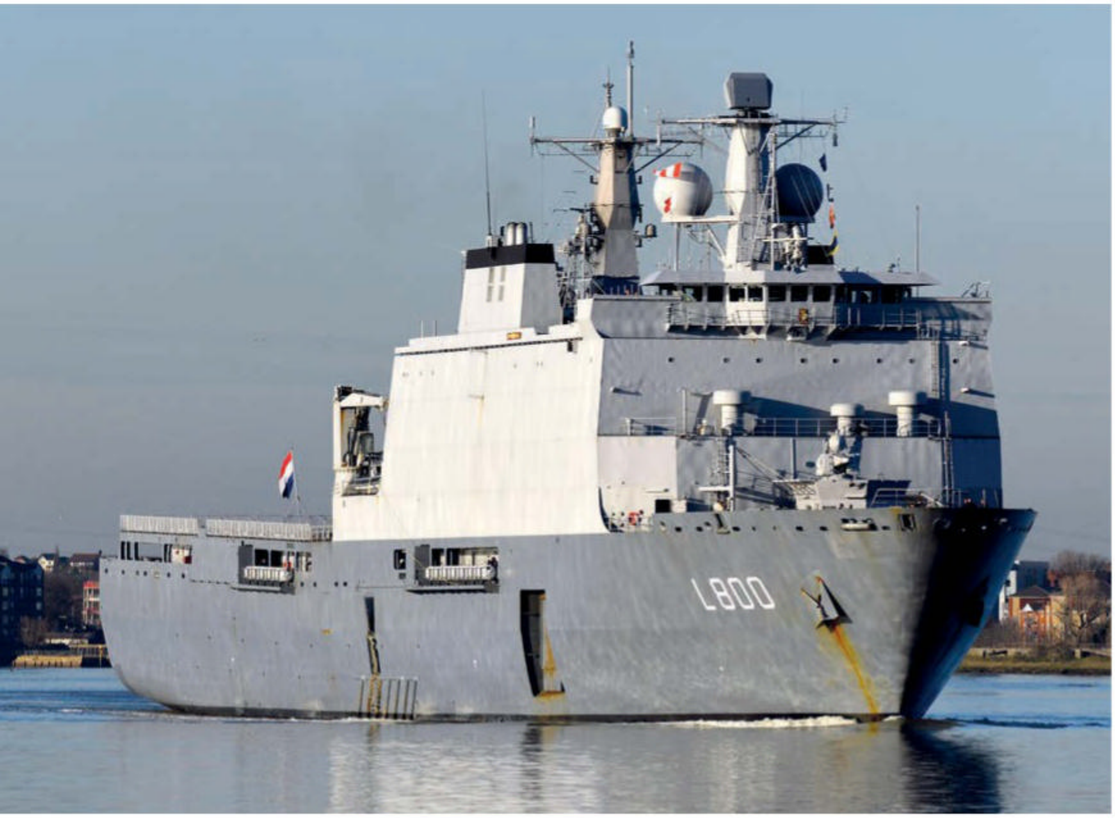
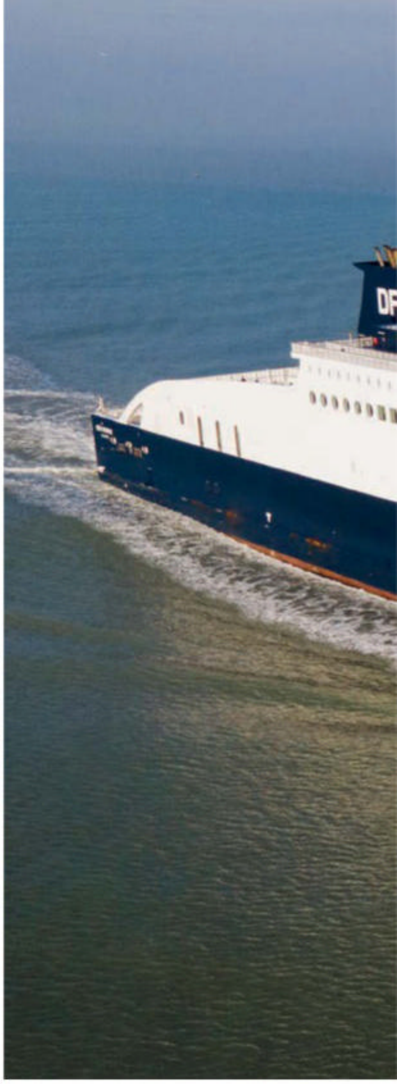


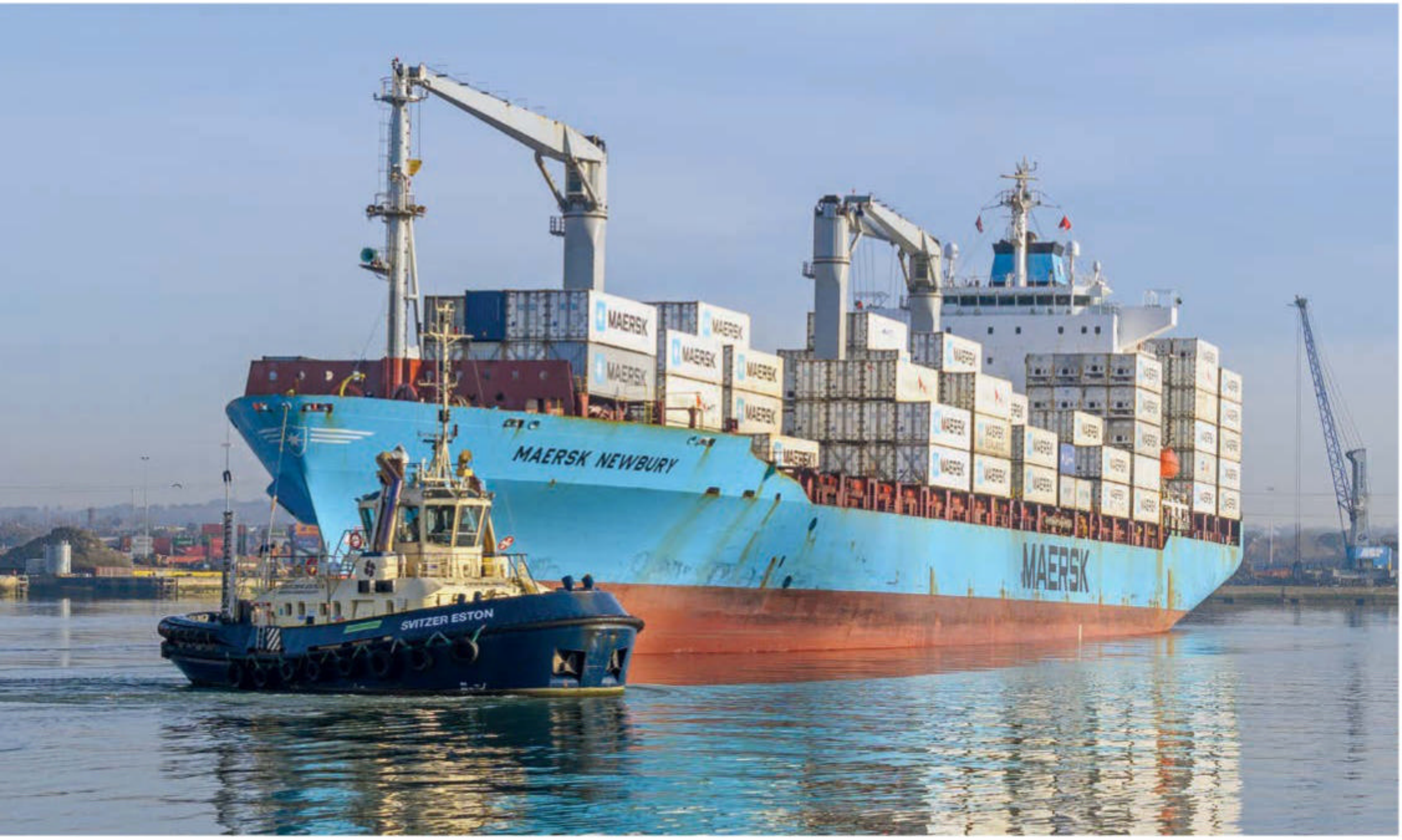
P&O Cruises' 2000-built cruise ship Aurora (76,152gt) passes Cowes outward bound from Southampton in August 2022. ANDREW COOKE

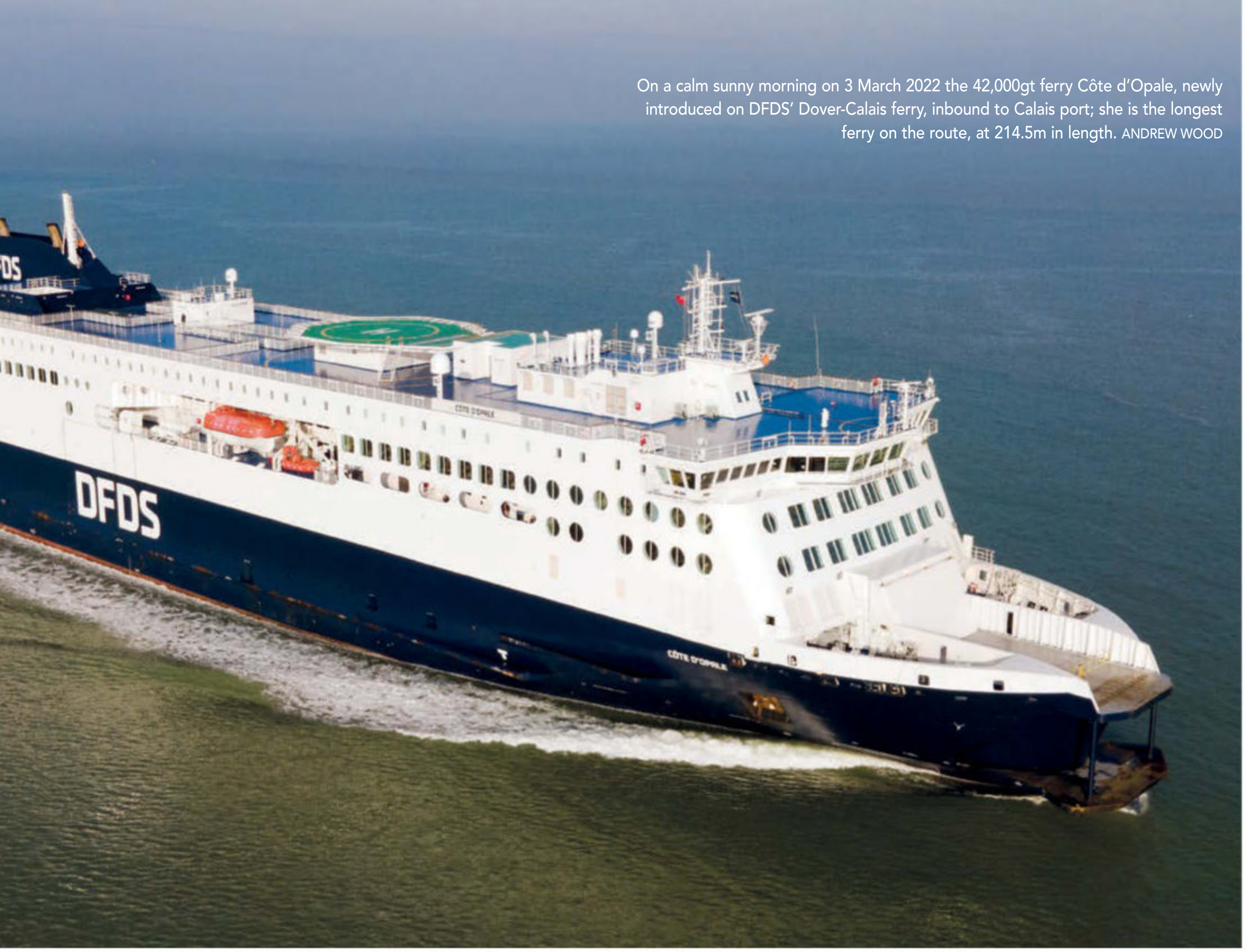




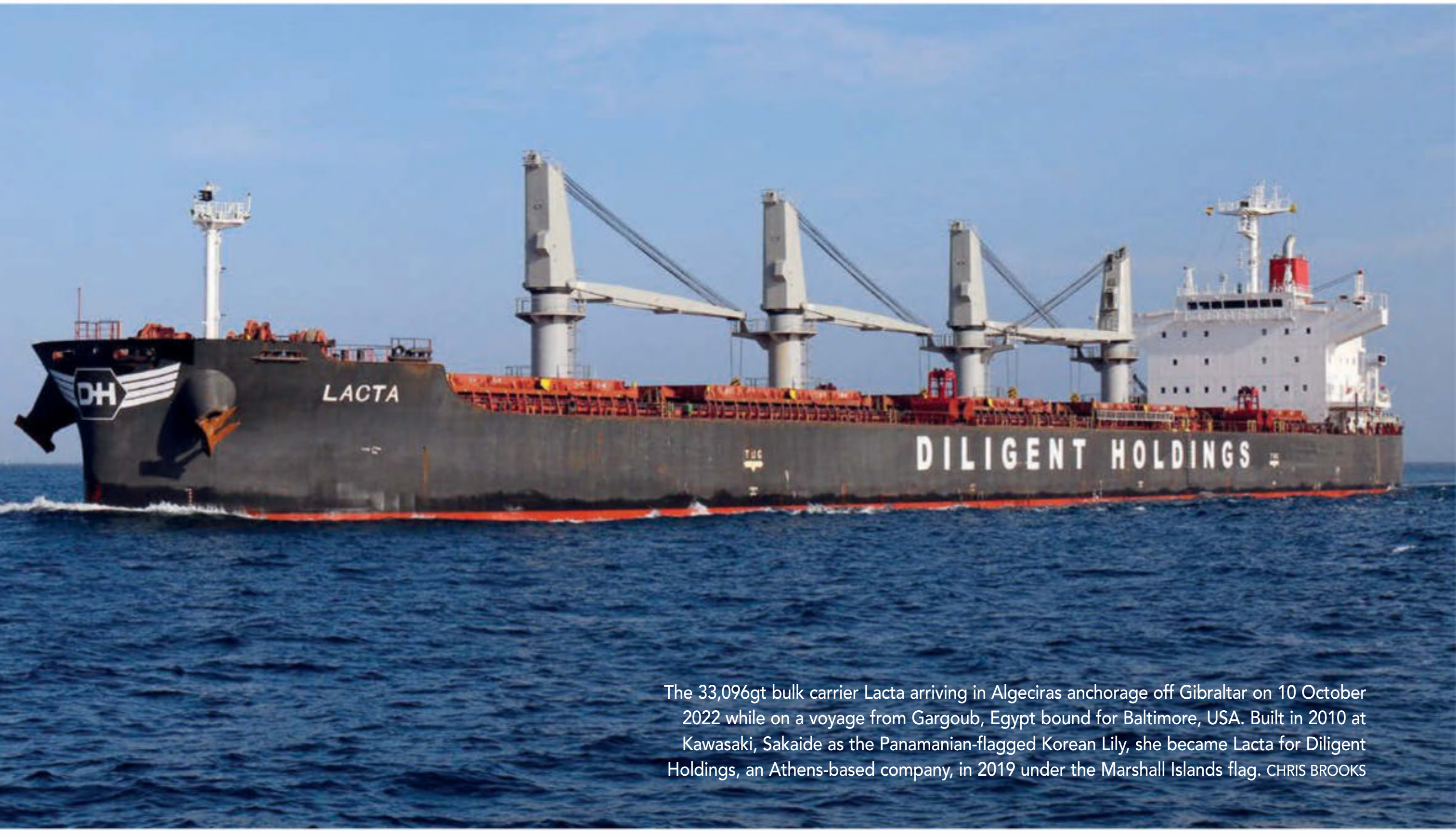
▲ The amphibious transport ship HNLMS Rotterdam, which commissioned on 18 April 1998, on the Thames passing Gravesend in February, following her visit to London. FRASER GRAY

▼ The 2001-built container ship Maersk Newbury (26,582gt, ex-Caroline Schulte, Cap Bisti, Libra Houston) berthing at Southampton, with the assistance of the tug Svitzer Eston, on 10 February. MARITIME PHOTOGRAPHIC





On a calm sunny morning on 3 March 2022 the 42,000gt ferry Côte d'Opale, newly introduced on DFDS' Dover-Calais ferry, inbound to Calais port; she is the longest ferry on the route, at 214.5m in length. ANDREW WOOD



The 33,096gt bulk carrier Lacta arriving in Algeciras anchorage off Gibraltar on 10 October 2022 while on a voyage from Gargoub, Egypt bound for Baltimore, USA. Built in 2010 at Kawasaki, Sakaide as the Panamanian-flagged Korean Lily, she became Lacta for Diligent Holdings, an Athens-based company, in 2019 under the Marshall Islands flag. CHRIS BROOKS

CALEDONIAN 50 YEARS OF FAME

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LOCH SEAFORTH
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Caledonian MacBrayne

In 2023 Caledonian MacBrayne will mark half a century since it began operations and its familiar livery first appeared in the waters of the Firth of Clyde and West Highlands of Scotland. Colin J. Smith looks back over the last 50 years.

Caledonian MacBrayne is the major operator of passenger and vehicle ferries, and ferry services, between the mainland of Scotland and 22 of the major islands on Scotland's west coast, and January 2023 marks half a century since the Caledonian Steam Packet Co acquired most of the ships and routes of MacBrayne's and commenced joint Clyde and West Highland operations under the Caledonian MacBrayne name, with a headquarters at Gourock.

Founded in 1889, the Caledonian Steam Packet Co (CSP) was a railway-owned subsidiary operating steamer, ferry and excursion sailings on the Firth of Clyde, with its main terminals at

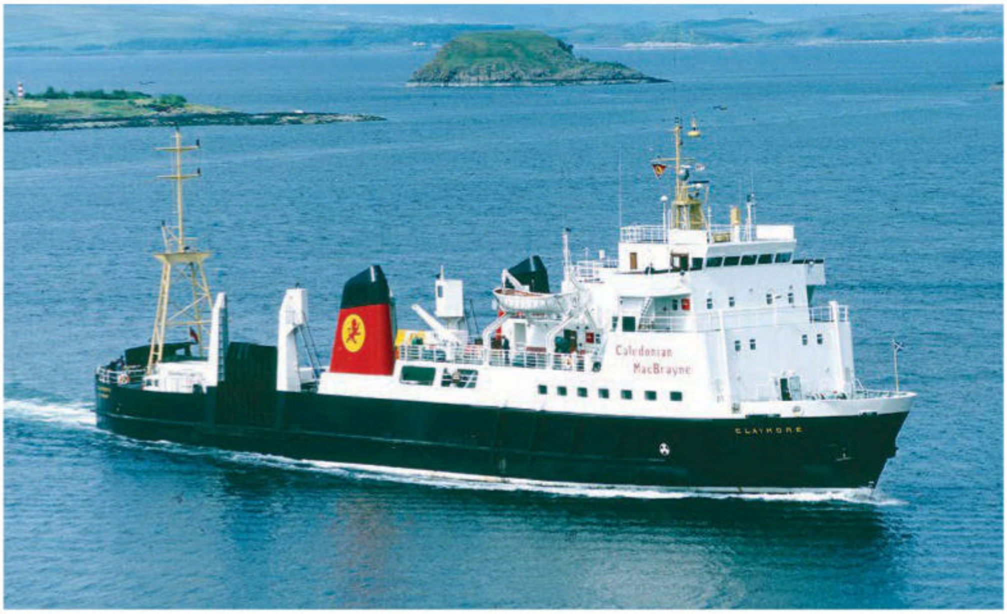
MACBRAYNE

The Caledonian MacBrayne flagship Loch Seaforth at Ullapool. MARITIME PHOTOGRAPHIC

Gourock, Wemyss Bay and Ardrossan. By 1969 the CSP had become a somewhat neglected subsidiary of British Rail, operating a mixed bag of elderly passenger-carrying steamships, such as the turbine steamers *Duchess of Hamilton* (1932) and *Queen Mary II* (1933) and the paddle steamers *Caledonia* (1934) and *Waverley* (1947).

There were four diesel-powered motor vessels, the 'Maids', and three car ferries. A fourth, larger car ferry, *Glen Sannox*, was built in 1957 to serve Arran but, although the youngest vessel in the fleet, she was already 11 years old. Despite the growth of private car usage and declining levels of railway-connecting passenger traffic, the service pattern continued to reflect railway management mentality, which

▲ CalMac's first drive-through ferry, the 1966-built Caledonia, leaving Oban on 4 August 1986. ALL PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR UNLESS STATED



▲ The 1978-built Claymore arriving at Oban on 18 June 1988. For ten years she operated between Oban and the Outer Isles, and was later acquired by Pentland Ferries.

harked back to an era which had largely passed by the 1950s, as car usage grew exponentially.

In 1851 David and Alexander Hutcheson and their junior partner David MacBrayne began steamer services serving West Highland and Island communities with their fleet of cargo and passenger-carrying steamers and ferries. By the late 1960s the state of neglect apparent in the CSP fleet was mirrored by MacBrayne's, whose three original car ferries were five years old, with only one new vessel, *Iona*, imminent.

Like the CSP, their fleet included passenger vessels of an elderly vintage, including the veteran turbine *King George V* dating from 1926 and a number of passenger-carrying diesel-powered passenger ferries dating from the 1930s, together with the passenger vessels *Loch Seaforth* and *Claymore*.

Modernisation and new ships were urgently required, and in January 1969 the CSP and MacBrayne's passed into the control of the new Scottish Transport Group (STG) based in Edinburgh, and the ground was laid for the establishment of Caledonian MacBrayne.

The STG envisaged spending £25 million over five years on transforming shipping services on the West Coast. Between 1969 and 1973 the first drive-through ferry, *Caledonia*, formerly *Stena Baltica*, took over services from Ardrossan to Arran, and a new Islay ferry, *Iona*, was delivered by Ailsa Shipbuilding Co at Troon in 1970. She was the first drive-through roll-on/roll-off ferry built for the David MacBrayne fleet, although she began service operating on the Firth of Clyde on the Gourock-Dunoon route.

Vehicle capacity within the fleet was increased with the modification of *Glen Sannox*, *Maid of Cumbrae*, *Clansman* and *Arran*, while between 1972 and 1976 eight bow loaders, the 'Small Island' class ferries, were introduced to serve several new short ferry routes. The era of railway control was over and, with car ownership increasing, new car ferries and point-to-point services were the order of the day.

CALMAC AT THE HELM

On 1 January 1973 the CSP was renamed Caledonian MacBrayne Ltd and inherited all passenger and vehicle ferry services on the Clyde and in the West Highlands. The former CSP and MacBrayne vessels donned the integrated colour scheme of red and black funnels (MacBrayne) with a red lion mounted on a yellow background disc (CSP), black hulls and duck egg blue deck fittings.

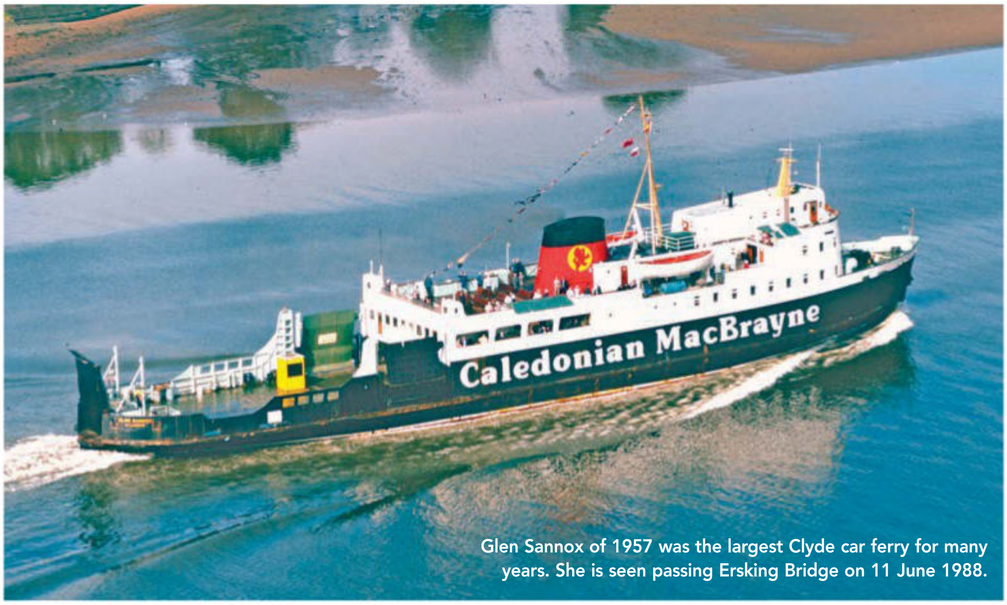
A new company house flag was adopted, reflecting the flags of both former companies, although a new pennant, based on the company funnel colours, was unfurled on 2 June 1980, and the now familiar colour scheme was completed by the addition of the company name to the ship's hulls from 1984.

The first general manager, John Whittle, was charged with the unenviable task of transforming the old style of service provision into a roll-on roll-off network befitting the latter half of the 20th century.

The 1970s saw the demise of CalMac's last Clyde steamers, with *Waverley* withdrawn in September 1973, while the last turbine steamer, *Queen Mary*, dating from 1933, sailed on her last cruises in 1977. On Loch Lomond, the paddle steamer *Maid of the Loch* struggled on until 1981, and lay derelict for many years thereafter. Happily, she is currently under restoration at Balloch.

WEST HIGHLANDS

In 1972 the conversion of *Clansman* (1964) to a



Glen Sannox of 1957 was the largest Clyde car ferry for many years. She is seen passing Ersking Bridge on 11 June 1988.

▲ **Suilven (1,980gt) was the largest ferry in the CalMac fleet from 1974 until 1995. She is seen leaving Stornoway on 12 April 1993.**

▲ **The 2005-built Bute approaching Rothesay, with the backdrop of Toward Point on the Cowal peninsula, November 2022.** ANDREW WOOD

drive-through ferry meant that rapid progress was made in developing such services. Within two years, two major passenger- and vehicle-carrying vessels had been built for West Highland services.

In August 1974 *Pioneer* took up service on the Islay routes from West Loch Tarbert, while *Suilven* of 1975 was acquired from her builders in Norway for the Ullapool-Stornoway route. She would be the Company's largest vessel for the next 20 years. In 1979 two new vessels, *Claymore* and *Lochmor*, were built to serve the Outer Isles and the Small Isles respectively.

FIRTH OF CLYDE

On the Firth of Clyde the first major new vessels built since *Glen Sannox* of 1957 arrived in 1974, when Caledonian MacBrayne placed *Jupiter* and *Juno* into service on the Gourock-Dunoon route. A near-sister, *Saturn*, arrived in 1978 on the Wemyss Bay-Rothesay route, while a double-ended ferry, *Isle of Cumbrae*, was introduced on the Largs-Cumbrae service in 1977.

The rebuilt *Clansman*, freed from the Ullapool-Stornoway route by the arrival of *Suilven* in 1975, took up service on the Arran crossing, allowing the relatively small *Caledonia* to serve Mull and *Glen Sannox* to become the Clyde cruise vessel, replacing the 1933-built *Queen Mary* in 1978. Old ships were retired in their droves, with the paddle steamer *Waverley* sold to the Paddle Steamer Preservation Society in August 1974.

THE 1980s AND 1990s

Traffic growth continued and a new, larger Arran ferry, *Isle of Arran*, was built in 1984. Next came *Hebridean Isles* in 1986, launched sideways into the River Ouse in July 1985, and *Isle of Mull* in 1988 for the Outer Isles and Oban-Craignure services respectively. *Lord of the Isles* followed in 1989, with the Skye ferries *Loch Fyne* and *Loch Dunvegan* appearing in 1991, followed by an even larger vessel for the Ardrossan-Brodick route, *Caledonian Isles*, in 1994.

Isle of Arran generated significantly increased traffic to Arran and both she and *Caledonian Isles* are still in service, with *Isle of Arran* regularly appearing on routes across the network, including on the seasonal Ardrossan-Campbeltown service. The culmination of this period was the magnificent *Isle of Lewis*, which appeared on the Ullapool-Stornoway route in 1995, replacing *Suilven*.

In 1986 four Loch class double-ended ferries, *Loch Ranza*, *Loch Riddon*, *Loch Striven* and *Loch Linnhe*, were constructed at Hessle for shorter routes, and they provided the general layout which followed in subsequent double-enders *Loch Tarbert* (1992), *Loch Bhrusda* (1996), *Loch Alainn* (1997), the much larger *Coruisk* (2003), *Loch Portain* (2003) and *Loch Shira* (2007).

With the opening of the Skye Bridge in 1995, the 1991-built double-enders *Loch Fyne* and *Loch Dunvegan* became redundant, and found employment at Lochaline and Colintraive respectively. Today they remain valuable members of the fleet.

Much of this period was overseen by Managing Director Colin Paterson, whose influence remains strong, as many of the new vessels built in that period remain in CalMac service. After retiring in 1997, Paterson became Chairman of the Loch Lomond Steamship Company until his death in 2013.

INTO THE 21st CENTURY

A new *Clansman* appeared in 1998 from Appledore Shipbuilders in Devon to serve

The 1973-built Jupiter feels the swell off Gourock. She was the first of a new generation of car ferries built in the 1970s to serve the routes on the Firth of Clyde nicknamed the 'Streakers' because of their greater speed and excellent. manoeuvrability.

The 2003-built Coruisk approaching Wemyss Bay as relief vessel on the Wemyss Bay-Rothesay route, covering for Argyll, November 2022. ANDREW WOOD

Caledonian MacBrayne

the Outer Isles, while 2000 saw the introduction of a near-sister, *Hebrides*, launched by HM Queen Elizabeth in August, and the Troon-built *Lochnevis* for the Small Isles. She was followed by two Polish built sisters, *Bute* and *Argyle*, in 2005 and 2007 respectively, for the Rothesay route.

In 2011 the Polish-built *Finlaggan* appeared on services from Kennacraig to Islay, while two new hybrid ferries, *Hallaig* and *Lochinvar,* were built by Fergusons in 2013 and a third, *Catriona*, was completed in 2015.

After 57 years the Gourock-Dunoon car ferry service became passenger only, and *Saturn* made the final car ferry sailing on 29 June 2011. She followed near sisters *Jupiter* and *Juno* out of the fleet, but she remains in service in Greece as *Orion*.

Thereafter, the passenger service was operated by Argyll Ferries, and since January 2019 by CalMac themselves, using the passenger ferries *Argyll Flyer* and *Ali Cat*. Together with the Gourock-Kilcreggan ferry service, which CalMac have operated since 2020 using the passenger ferry *Chieftain*, the route will receive new ships in the next few years.

In 2012 CalMac commissioned Flensburger Schiffbau-Gesellschaft to build its largest ever ship, the 8,680gt *Loch Seaforth*, which appeared on the Ullapool-Stornoway route in February 2015. At the other end of the scale, 2017 saw the introduction of the small *Carvoria* at Kerrera, and in 2022 *Loch Frisa*, formerly the Norwegian-owned *Utne*, entered service on the Oban-Craignure route.

The next newbuild has been enveloped in controversy: the new *Glen Sannox* and her unnamed sister, known as Hull

HEBRIDEAN ISLES
Eilean Innse Gall
Caledonian

▲ Hebridean Isles on one of her twice weekly runs from Islay via Colonsay to Oban, passing through the Sound of Kerrera, with the island of Kerrera beyond. Completed in 1985, she was the first CalMac vessel to be built outside Scotland. ANDREW WOOD

▼ Caledonian Isles leaving Brodick on 7 October 2014. She is is one of the largest ships owned by Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited.

CALEDONIAN ISLES
GLASGOW
www.calmac.co.uk
Caledonian MacBrayne

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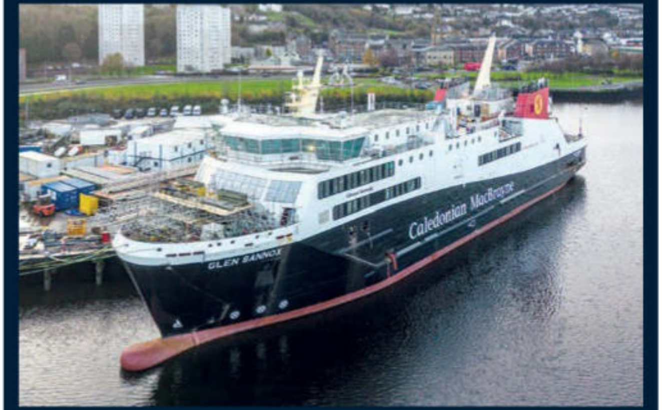
MacBrayne

CURRENT AND FUTURE FLEET

The current fleet is comprised of 35 vessels, ranging in age from Isle of Cumbrae of 1977 to Carvoria, built 40 years later. An updated plan outlining the future make-up of the ferry fleet serving the Clyde and Hebrides was published on 30 January 2018 by Transport Scotland.

A ten-year programme of investment by CMAL is under way, supported by £580 million from the Scottish government for five years between 2021 and 2026. The plans will deliver 21 new vessels, upgrades to harbour infrastructure and investment to fund plans from 2026 onwards.



▲ Glen Sannox at Port Glasgow in August 2022. Work on the ferry began in 2017 and she was initially expected to enter service in summer 2018 at a cost of £97 million. However, numerous technical difficulties and other delays have significantly delayed her completion. MARITIME PHOTOGRAPHIC

802, almost identical ships, were both ordered in 2015 from the Ferguson shipyard at Port Glasgow. *Glen Sannox* was launched in November 2017, and she is due to enter service in 2023, but both vessels are many years late and well over budget.

Orders have recently been placed with Cemre Marin Endustri shipyard in Turkey for the construction of four new ferries to serve Islay from Kennacraig and North Uist and Harris from Uig in Skye. Due for delivery between October 2024 and 2026, each ship will be 94.8m in length, with capacity for up to 450 passengers and 100 cars or 12 commercial vehicles.

ORGANISATION CHANGES

In 1990 ownership of CalMac passed to the Secretary of State for Scotland and, in 1999, to the Scottish Executive, following the reconvening of the Scottish Parliament and, in 2007, the Scottish Government.

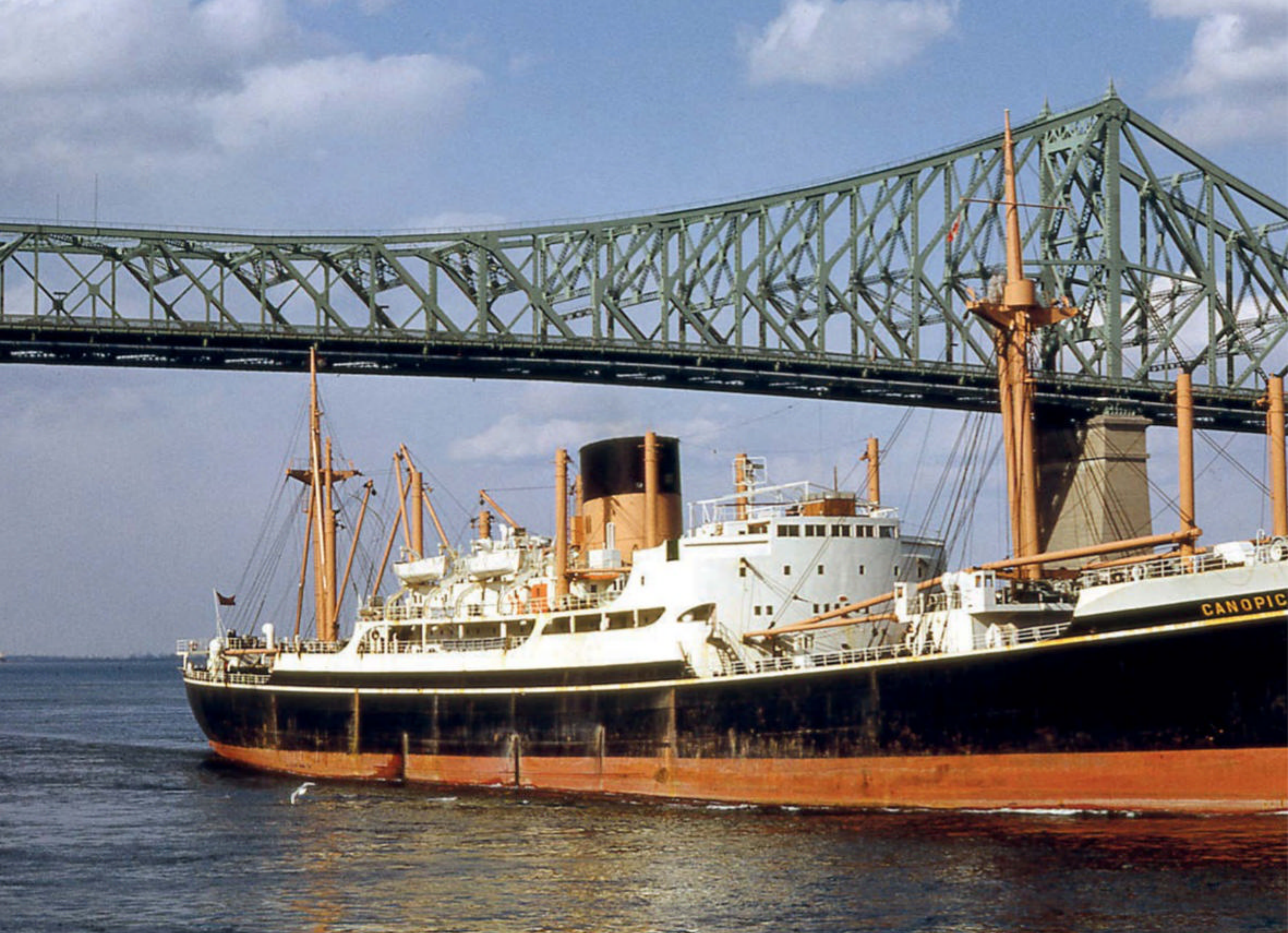
To comply with EU tendering legislation, Caledonian MacBrayne was split in 2006. A new company, CalMac Ferries Limited, was set up to operate the ships, while a second company, Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL), became owner of all ships and many of the piers they served. CalMac Ferries Limited was a new subsidiary company of the reactivated David MacBrayne Limited (DML) and continued to trade under the existing Caledonian MacBrayne brand.

Since its appearance in 1973, the famous Caledonian MacBrayne livery has adorned ships which were built 97 years apart, from the vintage *King George V* of 1926 to the soon to be introduced *Glen Sannox*. The immediate future is likely to see the introduction of several more vessels, as the current fleet is aging, with many of the major ships in need of replacement, so a proud heritage will live on into the future. SM

ArgyllFerries
Ali Cat

▲ Ali Cat arriving at Gourock on 23 May 2012 in Argyll Ferries livery. She operates a passenger-only service from Gourock-Dunoon with Argyll Flyer.

▲ The diminutive Carvoria, which entered service in 2017, awaits her next crossing to Kerrera at Gallanach on 29 April 2019.

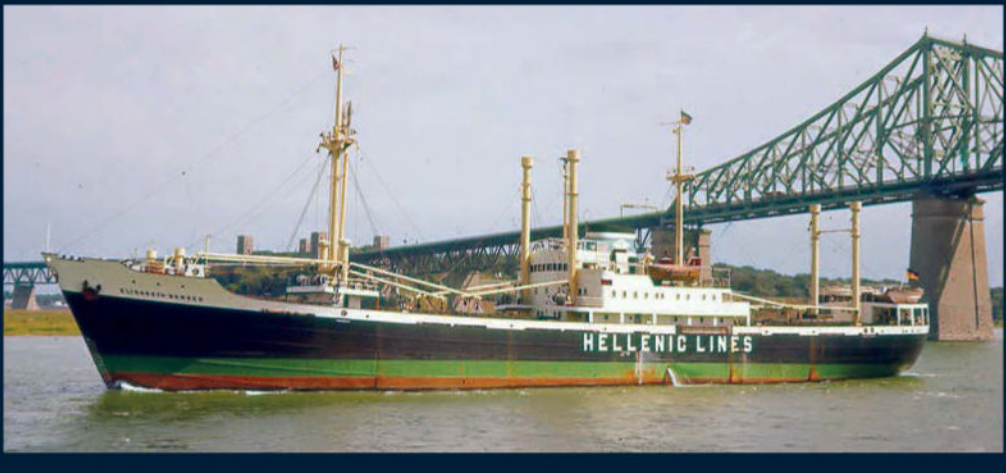


MONTREAL MEMO

Jim Shaw looks at some of the cargo ships which called at the Canadian port of Montreal in the post-war era.

▲ **Shaw Savill and Albion's 10,902grt Canopic, completed by Vickers-Armstrong in 1954 as the final of five C class sisterships, passing under Montreal's Jacques Cartier bridge in 1965, a decade before her sale to Cypriot owners to become Capetan Nicolas.** ALL PHOTOS FROM THE H. J. STOTT COLLECTION

▼ **The German-flagged Elisabeth Berger was completed by Weser Seebeck at Bremerhaven in 1954 for Bremen-based Aug. Zedler, but is seen at Montreal in 1961under charter to Hellenic Lines. She was broken up at Gadani Beach in 1987 after sailing under the names Antony, Angie Baby and Reem II.**



The Port of Montreal, located on the upper reaches of the St Lawrence River 990 miles inland from the Atlantic Ocean, is Canada's largest eastern port and currently handles over 2,000 cargo ships and 34 million tonnes of cargo annually.

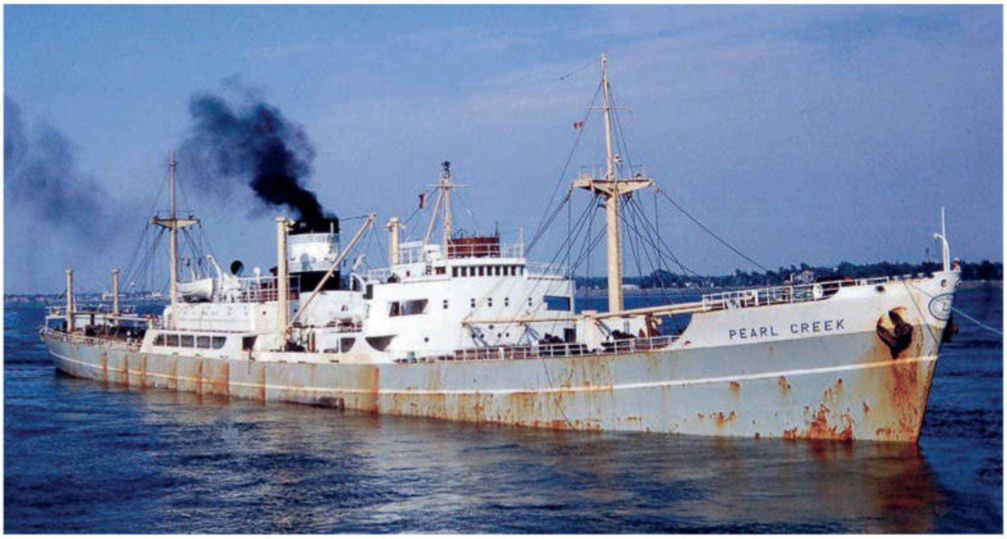
The first permanent wharves at the port were built by the Harbour Commission in 1830 and stretched over 1,430m (4,691ft) in length by 1832,

RIES

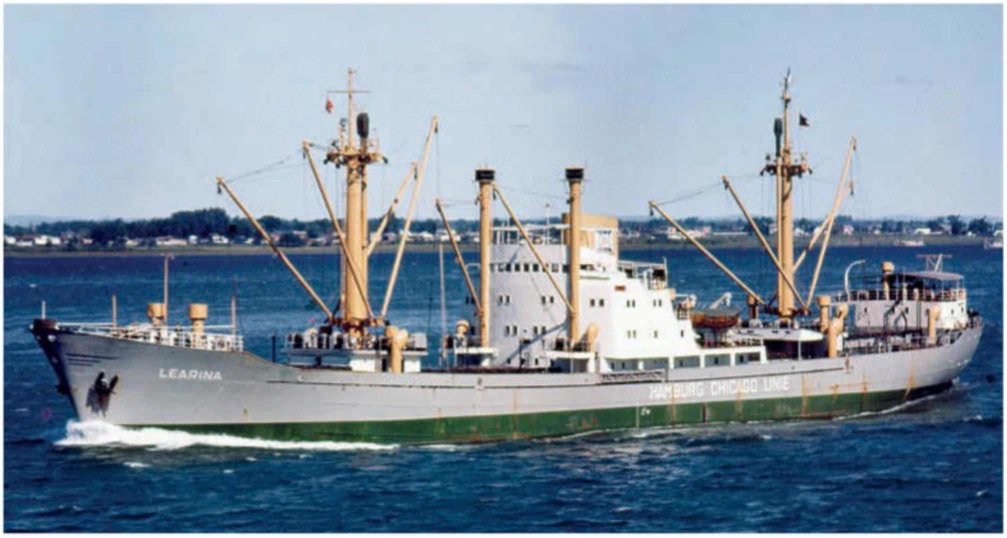
while the main shipping channel was deepened to 7.5m (24.5ft) in 1883 and 10.7m (35ft) in 1910.

After World War II more than 25 steamship lines were serving Montreal during the ice-free months, and in 1962 government-owned icebreakers began keeping the channel open between the port and downriver Quebec City intermittently, while year-round navigation was inaugurated in 1964.

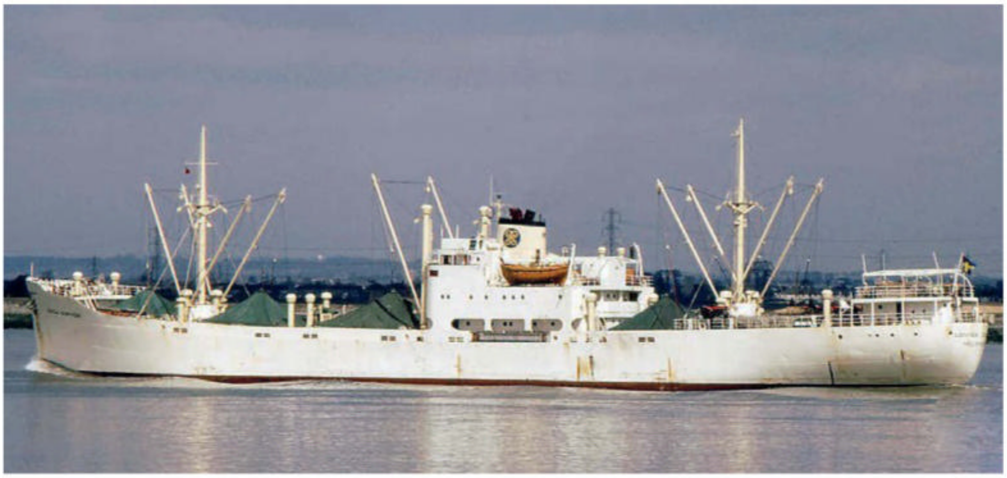
Three years later the first containers were being moved and by 1968 Canada's first container terminal had been built at Montreal. By 2000 the port was handling more than a million containers annually across three international and one domestic facility,



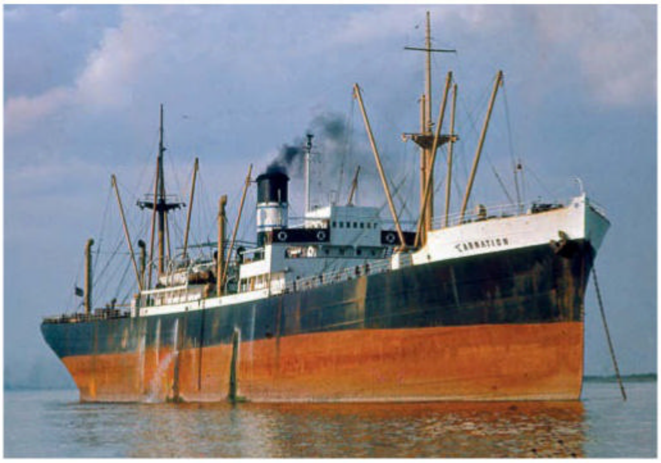
▲ Built by Hawthorn Leslie for the Monrovia Shipping Co of Liberia in 1958, the 8,465grt Pearl Creek spent most of her life under Greek ownership, becoming Leodamas Maritime Co's Leodamas in 1974, only to be lost five years later when heavily damaged in the Gulf of Suez as Zinovia and later broken up at Gadani Beach, Pakistan.



▲ Operating under the short-lived banner of Hamburg Chicago Linie, formed in 1952 by Hamburg-based owners Reederei A. Kirsten and Sartori & Berger, the 5,104grt Learina was completed by Germany's H.C. Stulcken Sohn yard in 1958 and broken up at Split, Yugoslavia in 1984 after sailing as Lambda, Beta and Alexandroupolis.



▲ The 1953-built Lovisa Gorthon, like many smaller ships trading into the Great Lakes prior to the completion of the new Seaway locks in 1959, was stretched from 96m to 102m once the larger locks were completed, increasing her capacity from 3,525dwt to 4,790dwt, but was sold in 1970 and broken up a decade later.



▲ Already an elderly ship when this photograph was taken in 1963, the 4,811grt Carnation had been built as Sheaf Holme for Newcastle's Sheaf Steam Shipping Co by the William Pickersgill & Sons yard at Southwick in 1929. She also sailed under the names Dusternbrook and Bonanza before being broken up at Valencia, Spain in 1965.

MANCHESTER

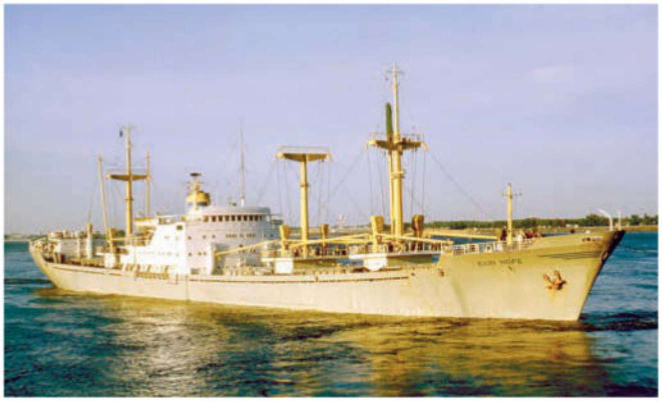
all connected to the Canadian hinterland by road and rail.

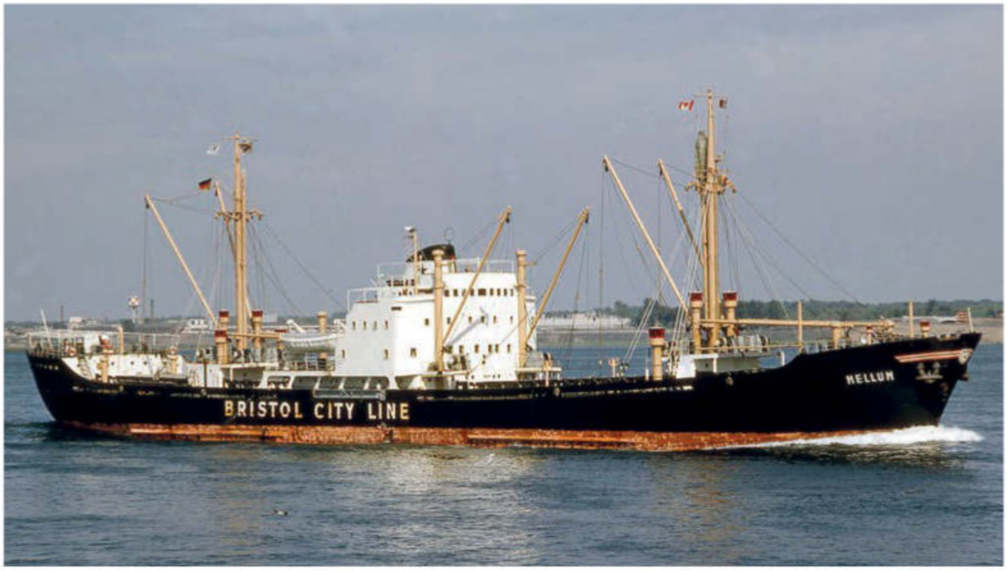
Although Montreal's growth has been dramatic, most ship enthusiasts consider the post-war period between the 1950s and 1970s to be the Canadian port's 'golden years', when conventional cargo ships were still being employed and most hailed from the UK.

During this period famous British names, such as Houlder Line, Manchester Liners, Cunard, Port Line and Ellerman, were seen on the river regularly, as well as some of Europe's leading companies and the occasional eastern tramp calling for grain.

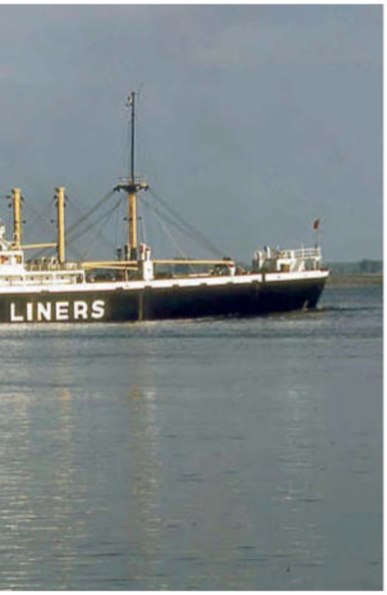
Marine photographer Harry J. Stott was resident in Montreal during this historic era and managed to photograph a great many of the conventional vessels then sailing on the St Lawrence, including several built before World War II. Although the breakbulk ships remained in the majority, by the time the Canadian city hosted the International and Universal Exposition or 'Expo' in 1967 they were largely gone by the mid- to late-1970s, as container-handling had taken over cargo services.

▼ The 9,139grt Elin Hope was completed by Holland's Scheepwerft De Hoope in 1961 for Norway's A/S Inger and, after a decade of trading, was sold to Yick Fung Enterprise Company of Hong Kong to become Fuchunkiang, before passing into the fleet of China's rapidly growing China Ocean Shipping Company as Xin Ming.



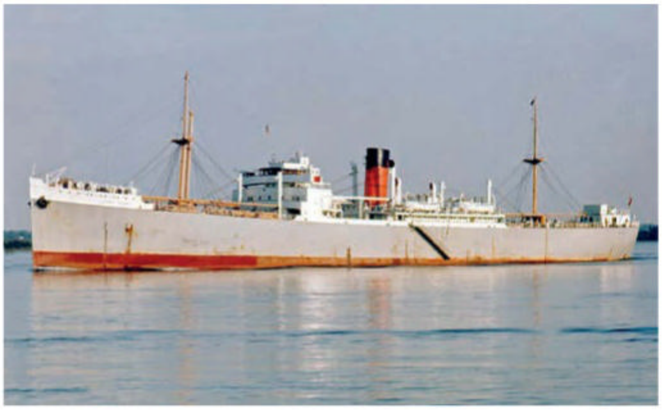


▲ Seen in 1965 while under charter to Bristol City Line, the 3,401grt Mellum was completed by Germany's Elsflether Werft at Elsfleth in 1957 for Glassel & Company of Bremen and, after being sold to the Pakistan National Shipping Corporation in 1967, was broken up at Gadani Beach as Panjnad in 1979.

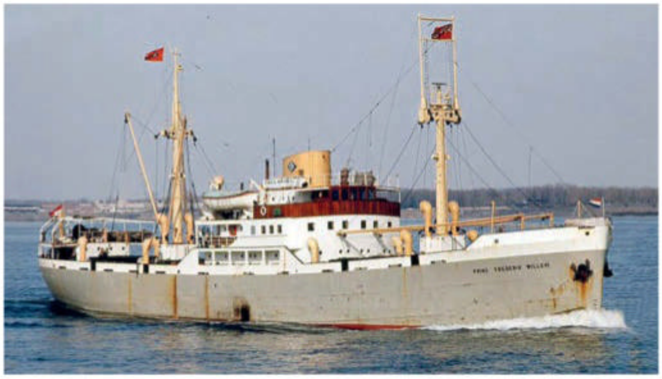


◀ Well down to her marks, Manchester Liners' 7,815grt Manchester Spinner was completed by Cammell, Laird in 1952 and sailed for Manchester Liners until being sold to Stravelakis Brothers of Piraeus, Greece in 1968, only to be lost to an explosion and fire three years later while sailing from the Gulf of Mexico to Brazil with a cargo of phosphate.

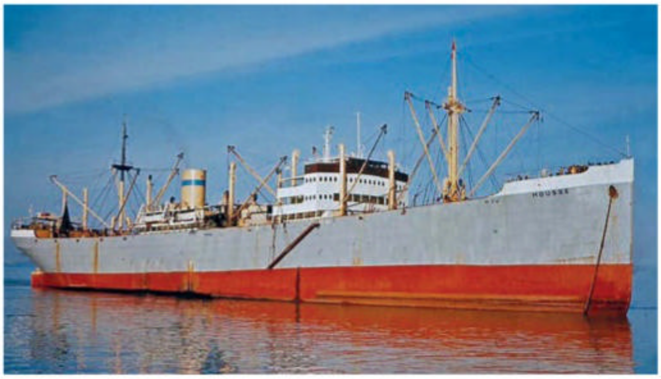
▼ The jaunty-looking 1,595grt Prins Frederik Willem upbound for Montreal on the St Lawrence in 1959 after being completed by Holland's De Merwede yard in 1951 for Anthony Veder & Company's transatlantic Oranje Lijn service. She was lost as the Italian-owned Michele Garofano at Benghazi, Libya in 1977, the result of running aground in heavy weather.



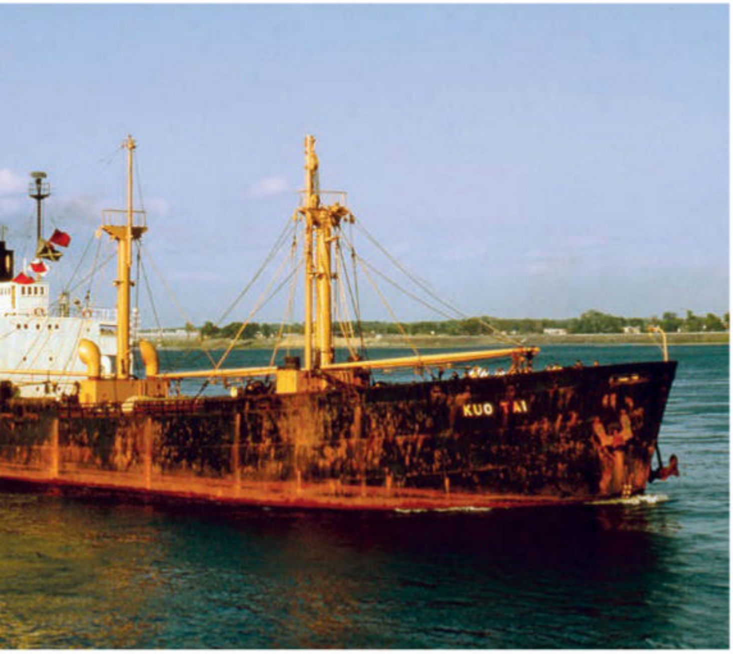
▲ A noble-looking ship of the past, the 7,980grt Port Fairy was completed by Swan, Hunter & Wigham Richardson in 1928 for the Commonwealth & Dominion Line, later to become Port Line, and in World War II managed to slice her escorting destroyer, HMCS Margaree (ex-HMS Diana), in two while she was operating with convoy OL8. The destroyer was lost, but the cargo ship managed to survive until 1965, when she was broken up at Hong Kong as Tai Shikan.

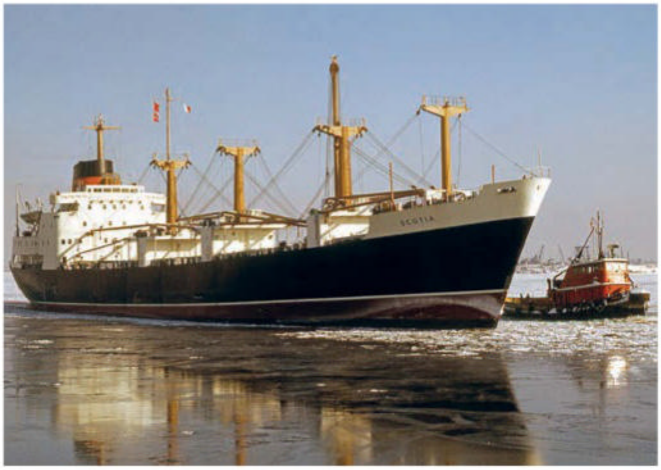


▼ One of several Liberty ships still trading into Montreal during the 1960s for grain cargoes, the 10,856dwt Kuo Tai was built in 1944 by the Bethlehem-Fairfield Shipyards at Baltimore, Maryland as Warren Delano and after the war was operated as Seachampion, Champion, Konstantinos V and Silvania before being acquired by Hong Kong's Eddie Steam Ship Company in 1964 and scrapped two years later.

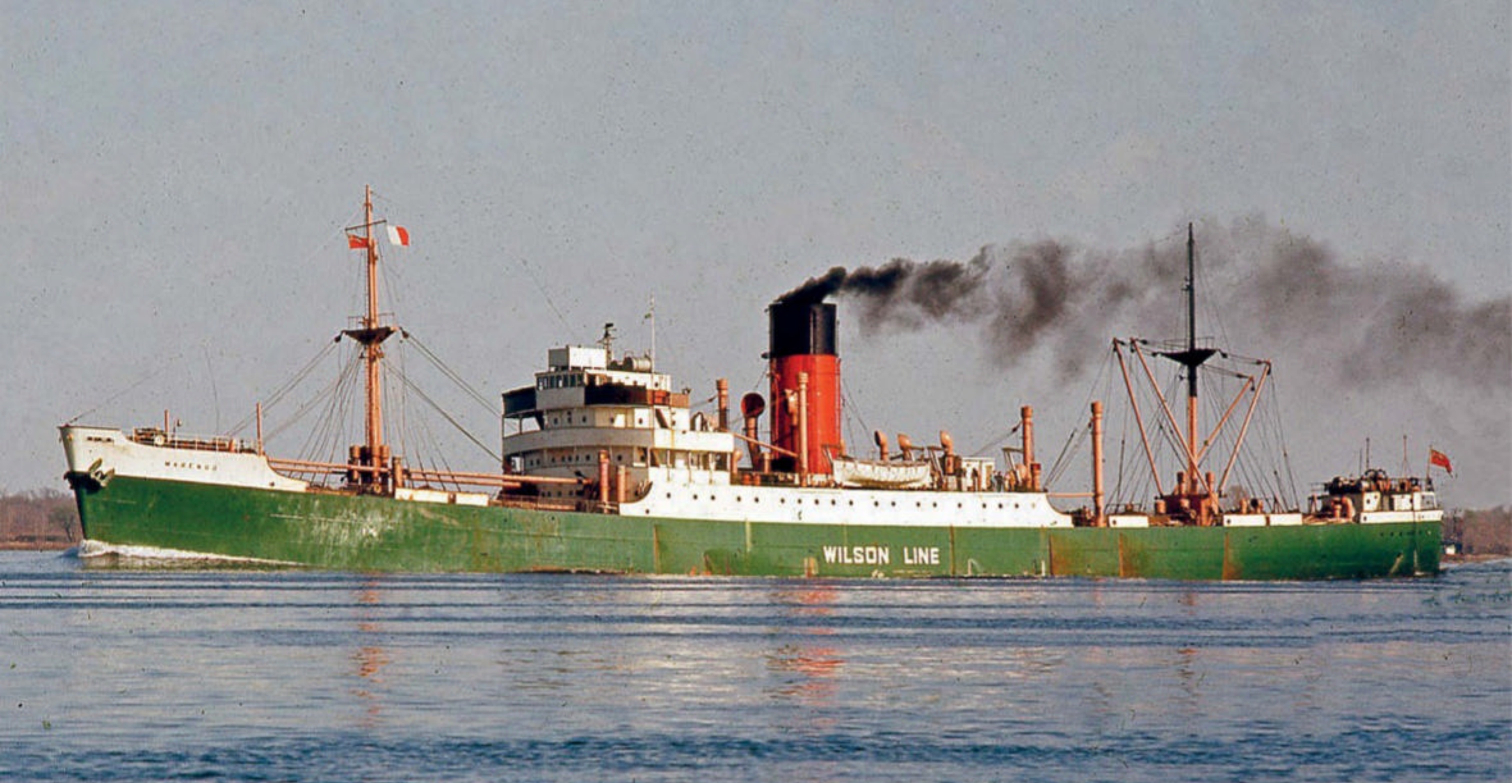


▲ Bearing a profile little changed from her original construction as Tai Yang for Norway's Wilh. Wilhelmsen in the late 1920s, the 6,751grt Mousse, pictured in 1962, was broken up at Shanghai in 1970, 41 years after her completion by Germany's Deutsche Werke as the first of a series of ten near-identical motorships destined for Barber Steamship Co's pre-war service between New York and the Far East.

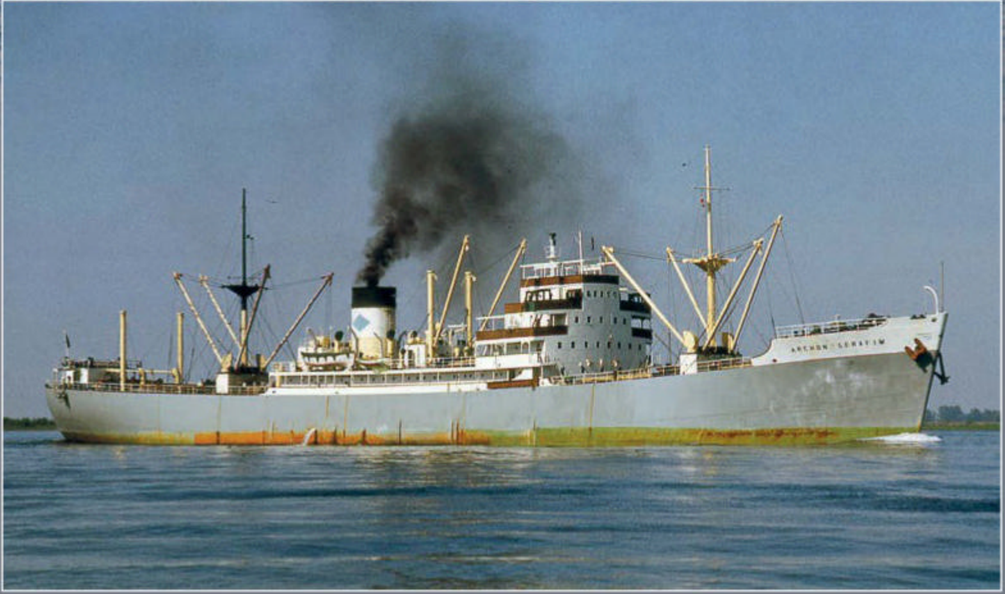




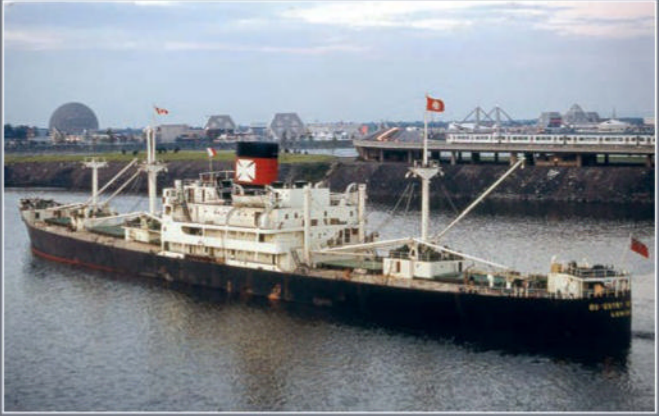
▲ Completed by Cammell Laird in 1966 with ice-strengthened bows specifically for working Cunard's St Lawrence River service, the 5,837grt Scotia, operating under charter from United Dominions Leasing, approaching Montreal on her maiden visit in January 1967, three years prior to her sale to Singapore's Neptune Orient Lines as Neptune Amber, after which the British-built cargo liner was scrapped at Bombay, India in 1984 under the name Sri Kailash.



▲ Seen painted in the green hull and red & black funnel colours of Ellerman's Wilson Line in 1961, the steam turbine-powered refrigerator ship Marengo was completed by Swan, Hunter & Wigham, Richardson in 1947 with limited passenger accommodation, but was sold two decades later to become Inomaen Cia Naviera's 4,981grt Nea Moni prior to being demolished at Yalova, Turkey in 1972 by Husrev Yurus.

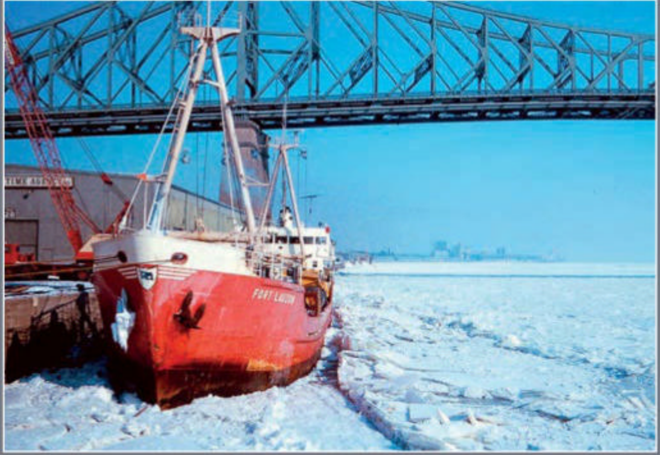


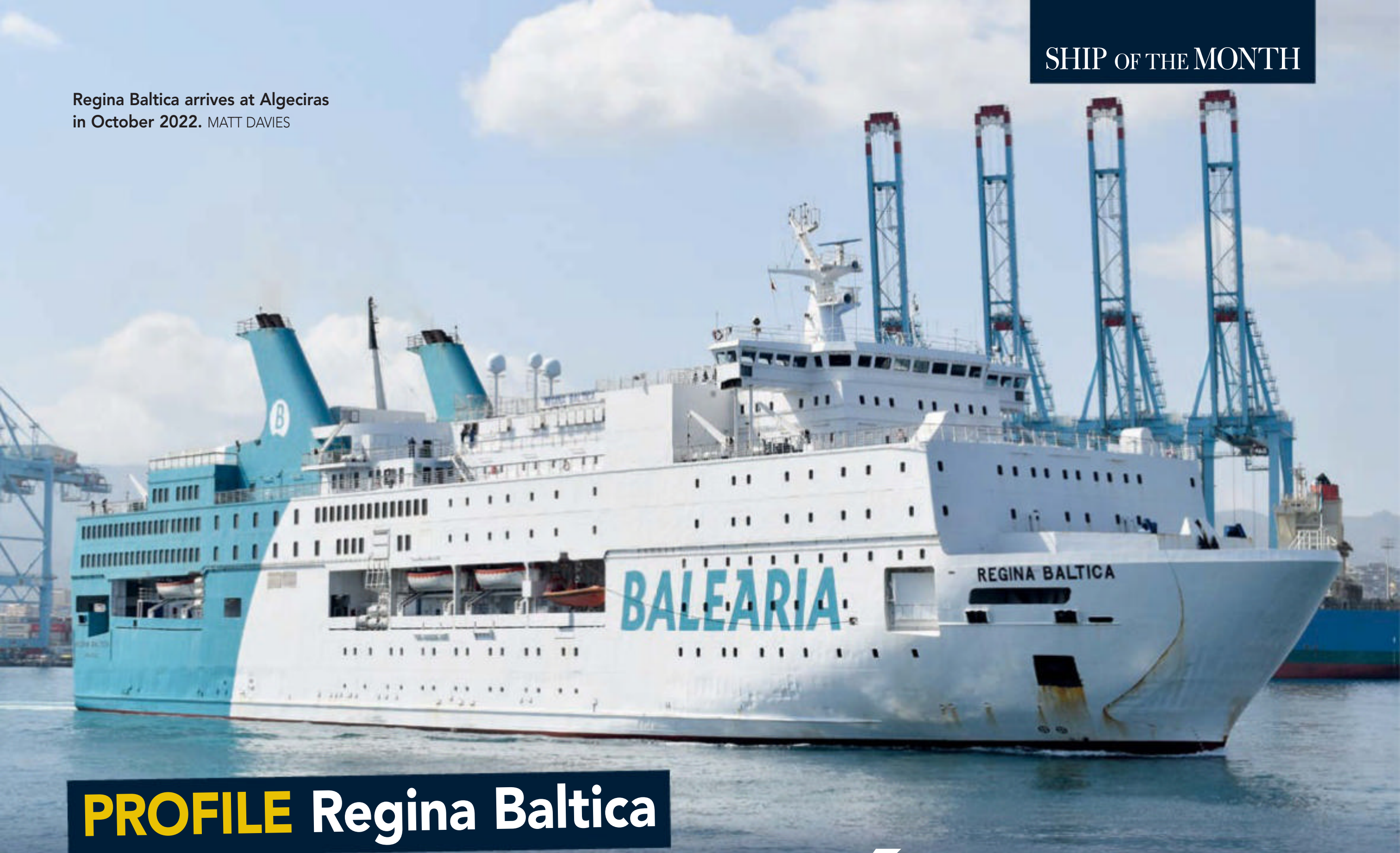
▶ Somehow looking older than her years, the Greek-flagged Archon Serafim was completed by William Doxford & Sons as Dartmoor for Moor Line (W. Runciman & Co) in 1950 and after being sold to Panormitis Cia. SA of Greece in 1963 was broken up at Istanbul a decade later.



▲ Arriving at Montreal in the summer of 1967, just in time to catch that year's World Fair, seen in the background, Houlder Line's 1952-built Oswestry Grange was propelled by a Doxford four-cylinder engine of 3,780bhp. She survived until 1979, when the 9,406grt ship was broken up at Gadani after trading under the names Dinos Methenitis and Dinos.

▼ Ice conditions on the St Laurence in February 1967, with Logistec Navigation's 914grt Canadian-flag coaster Fort Lauzon, built by Marine Industries at Sorel, Canada in 1964, alongside.




Regina Baltica arrives at Algeciras in October 2022. MATT DAVIES

PROFILE Regina Baltica

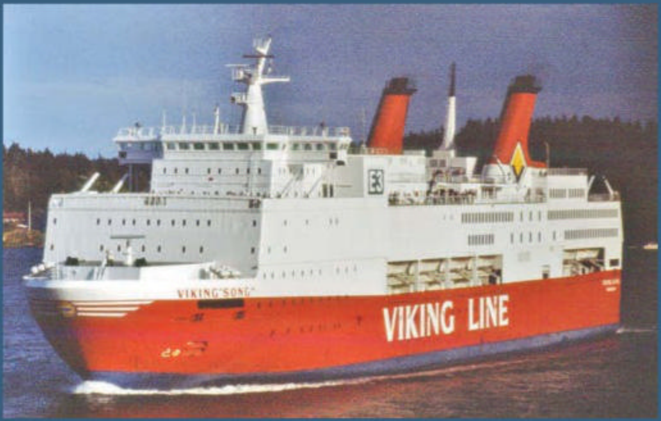
BELLEZA BÁLTICA

Matt Davies profiles Regina Baltica, Baleària's Baltic beauty, a veteran ferry which has been operating for more than four decades in different guises, with various operators.

Despite being over 40 years old, Baleària's ferry *Regina Baltica* is in excellent condition, sailing year-round with the Spanish operator on its Morocco and Algeria routes. Although good maintenance has contributed to the longevity of the 1980-built ship, the vessel's high-capacity drive-through car decks, and cruise ferry design, together with her good manoeuvrability, make her well suited for long overnight crossings to North Africa.

Baleària has enjoyed a meteoric rise, growing since its inception in 1998 to be the market leader in Spain and in 2023 celebrating its 25th Anniversary. The company has 29 vessels operating on 24 routes linking six countries. It employs 1,680 people and 2.9 million passengers, and 765,000 vehicles are carried annually.

Baleària's modern fleet includes nine LNG-powered vessels and its first all-electric ferry, *Cap de Barbaria*, is soon to be delivered for the Ibiza-Formentera route. Despite leading in green ferry technology, Baleària is not shy of operating older classic ferries, maintained to high standards. As well as *Regina Baltica*, the 39-year-old former channel ferry *Poeta Lòpez Anglada* has been in service for many years.


▲ With an imposing angular appearance, Viking Song made her debut in the summer of 1980.

SCANDINAVIAN ORIGINS

Regina Baltica is a former Viking Line and Fred. Olsen Line ferry. She was built in 1980 as *Viking Song* by Oy Wärtsilä Ab, in Turku, Finland for Rederi Ab Sally, one of three partners in Viking Line. Delivered in August 1980, the second of two sisters, she followed *Viking Saga*, delivered in June. They were introduced onViking Line's Stockholm-Helsinki route, where they greatly upgraded

REGINA-BALTICA
BALEARIA

A fine study of Regina Baltica at sea. AUTHOR'S PHOTO

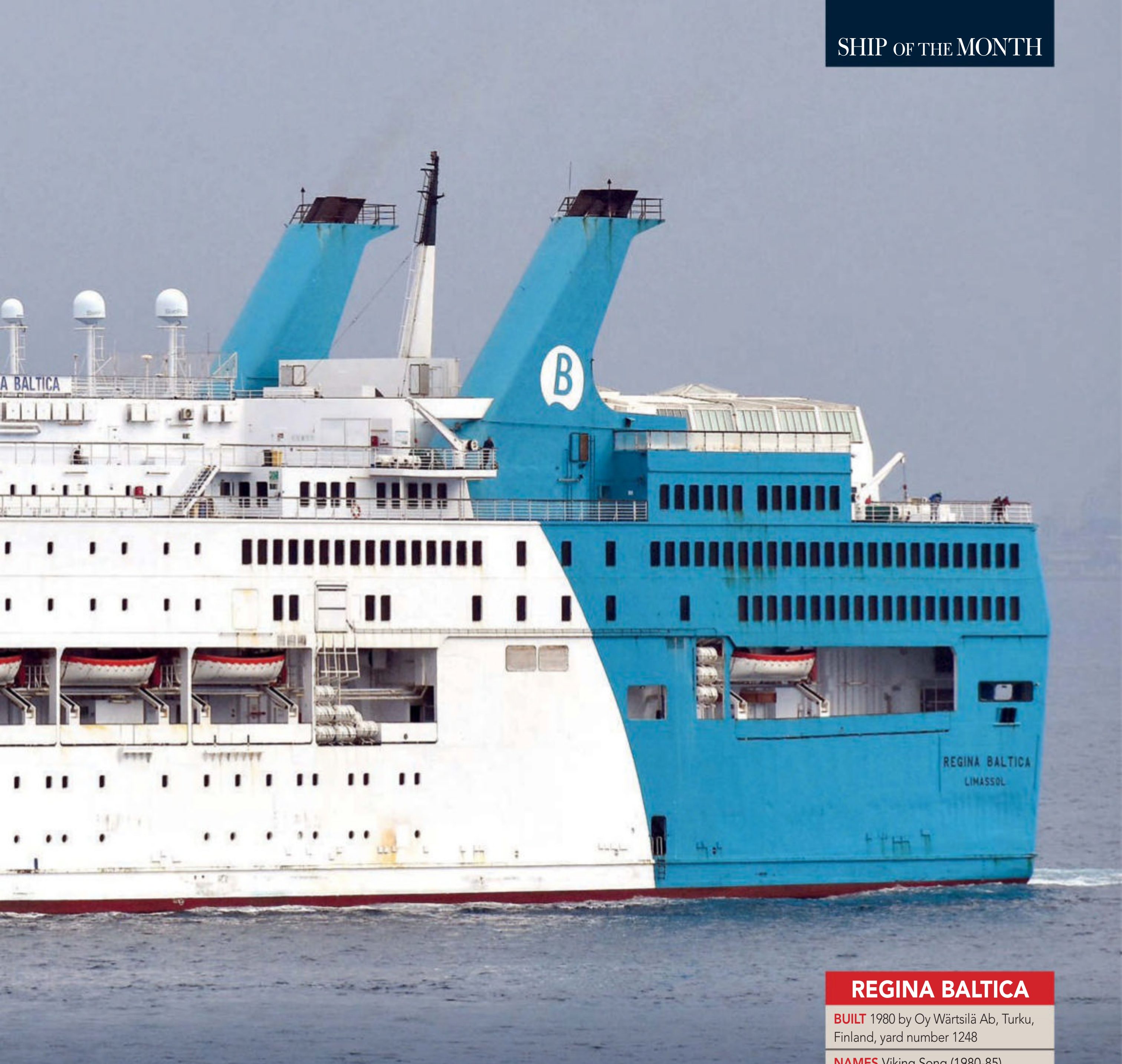
▲ **Regina Baltica as Braemar being operated by Fred. Olsen for sailings across the Skagerak and North Sea.** MATTHEW MURTLAND COLLECTION

capacity and quality.

Sally began planning the ships in the late 1970s. The basic hull, exteriors and interiors of the 1977-built gas turbine *Superferry Finnjet* were the starting point and resulted in a shorter, broader conventional-powered hull with greater vehicle capacity thanks to a full-height drive-through upper deck. To optimise capacity, the ships' superstructures continued to the stern, providing a high load capacity relative to size. As on Finnjet, cabin and passenger areas were segregated vertically, with cabins forward and facilities aft. The design was angular and futuristic, particularly that of the twin imposing funnels.

Finland's top maritime interior architect, Vuokko Laakso, designed the passenger areas: 2,000 passengers could be carried with berths for 1,300. The facilities included à la carte and buffet restaurants, cafeteria, steakhouse, bar, night club, shopping area, conference centre and a leisure centre with swimming pool, sauna and café.

Two double-height vehicle



decks enabled 60 trucks to be carried, or 510 cars if a mezzanine on the upper deck was used. When freight demand was low in July and August, car capacity could be maximised, while a mixed load could be carried in spring and autumn and, in the winter, freight was prioritised. The vehicle decks were unobstructed, each being five lanes wide, with casings and crew accommodation in vestibules on either side on two levels on each of the vehicle decks.

The upper vehicle deck side vestibules included double-

BALTIC LINE

▲ **Regina Baltica was chartered by Baltic Line and, as Anna Karenina, sailed from St Petersburg to Nynäshamn and Kiel from 1991 until the operator was declared bankrupt in 1996.** MATTHEW MURTLAND COLLECTION

REGINA BALTICA

BUILT	1980 by Oy Wärtsilä Ab, Turku, Finland, yard number 1248
NAMES	Viking Song (1980-85), Braemar (1985-90), Baltica (1991), Anna Karenina (1991-96), Anna K (1996), Regina Baltica (from 1996)
SISTER VESSEL	Viking Saga (1980-86), Sally Albatross (1986-90), destroyed by shipyard fire 1990
OWNER	Baleària Eurolineas Maritimas
TONNAGE	18,345gt, 2,830dwt
DIMENSIONS	145.2m x 25.5m, draught 5.5m
POWER	Four Wärtsilä-Pielstick 12 PC2SV diesels, 19,480 kW, 21.3 knots
CAPACITY	1,675 passengers, 504 cabins, 500 cars, 936 lane metres
FLAG	Cyprus
CURRENT ROUTE	Sète-Nador, Almeria-Nador

▲ **Regina Baltica was originally named Viking Song and spent five years operated by Viking Line.** MATTHEW MURTLAND COLLECTION

▲ **While she was working as an accommodation vessel for Sweoffshore and fitted with a large helipad, Regina Baltica retained her Tallink colour scheme.**

height open apertures for the lifeboats. On the starboard side aperture was a loading bay with hoist, for stores and provisions containers to be lifted onboard. At the bow and stern, long fixed inclined ramps connected the upper vehicle deck to the main vehicle deck below. To accommodate the fixed ramp, the bow is wide and blunt.

After sailing for just five years with Viking Line, *Viking Saga* and *Viking Song* were displaced in 1985-86 by larger ferries, the new sisters *Mariella* and *Olympia*, commissioned by Sally's Viking Line partners, SF Line and Slite.

Sally held exclusive rights on the Stockholm-Helsinki route for many years, having opened it and taken the financial risk when others had not wanted to, but once the rights expired Slite and SF Line wanted to be involved on what was then a booming route. Sally originally intended to continue but realised that its vessels would be no match for the new ones.

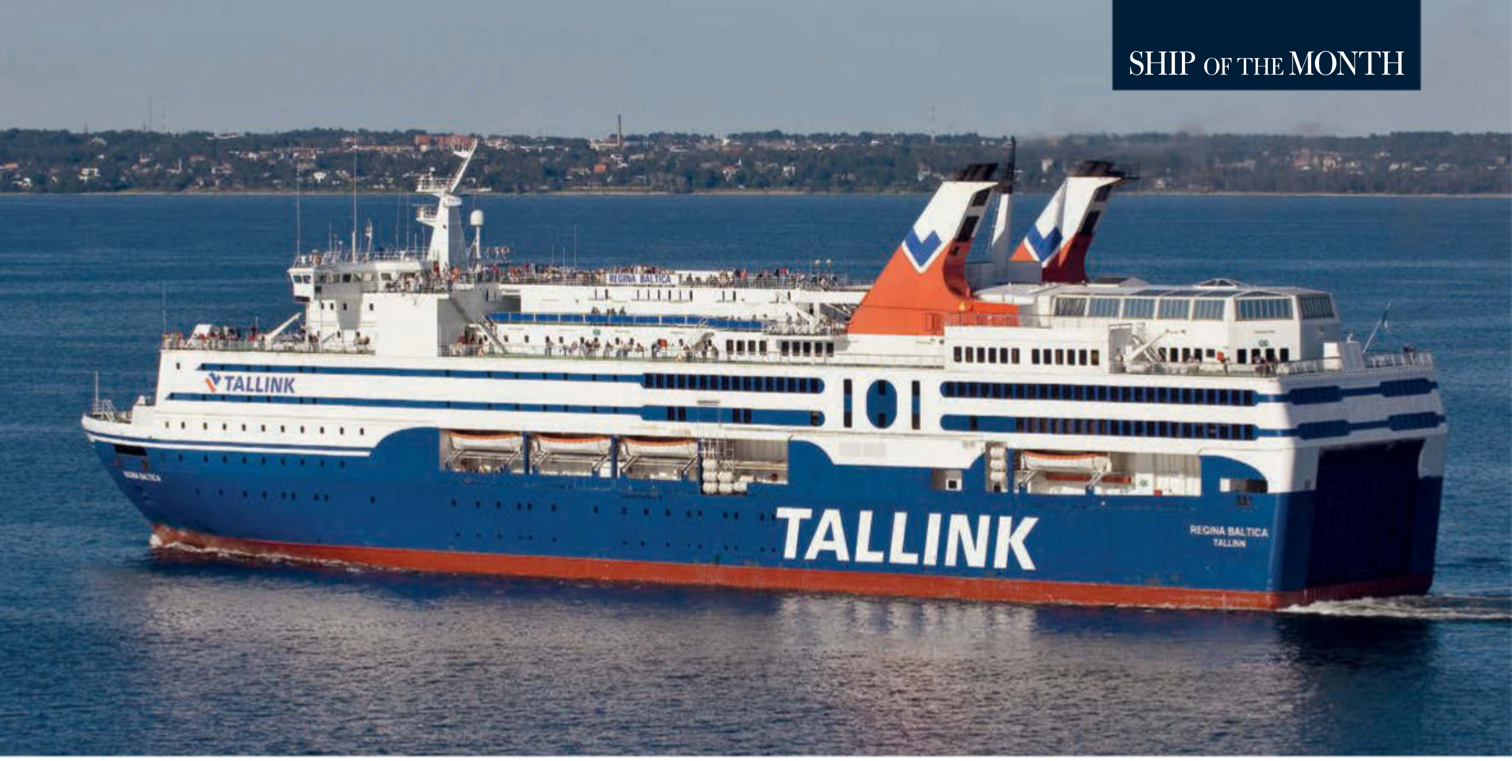
As a result, Sally withdrew, selling *Viking Song* to Fred. Olsen Lines in 1985 and redeploying *Viking Saga* to work on Sally-branded 24-hour cruises from Helsinki in 1986 as *Sally Albatross*. These were very successful, and modifications carried out in Bremerhaven in 1988 to *Sally Albatross* made the vessel more suitable for cruising. They included the extension of the forward superstructure, and its angular lines were streamlined.

Sadly, the new-look *Sally Albatross* was destroyed by fire at the Finnboda shipyard in Stockholm in 1990. The lower part of the hull was salvaged and used in the construction of a new cruise ship, which took the *Sally Albatross* name.

OLSEN AND TALLINK

As for *Viking Song*, in spring 1985 she was refitted at Blohm+Voss, Hamburg for Fred. Olsen. A second level was added to the nightclub, creating the Tropic Garden Lounge, an impressive two-storey atrium, which still remains. By day it was a conservatory lounge and at night a disco. On the upper vehicle deck, side ramps were fitted on the starboard side, forward and aft, to facilitate faster turnarounds. Renamed *Braemar*, the vessel sailed Oslo-Kristiansand-Harwich in summer and Oslo-Kristiansand-Hirtshals in winter. Constant changes were made over the next five years, with Hirtshals replacing Kristiansand on UK voyages and Oslo dropped and reinstated several times. Then, in 1990, the final year for

▼ **Baleària's other classic ferry, Poeta Lòpez Anglada, at Algeciras, Spain in 2018. She saw English Channel service as Champs Elysees, Stena Parisien and Seafrance Manet, and served as Stena Navigator from 2009 to 2011 on Stena's Belfast-Stranraer route before being acquired by Baleària in 2012. Initially renamed Daniya, she took her present name in 2013, when she was moved to the Algeciras to Tanger and Ceuta routes.** MATT DAVIES

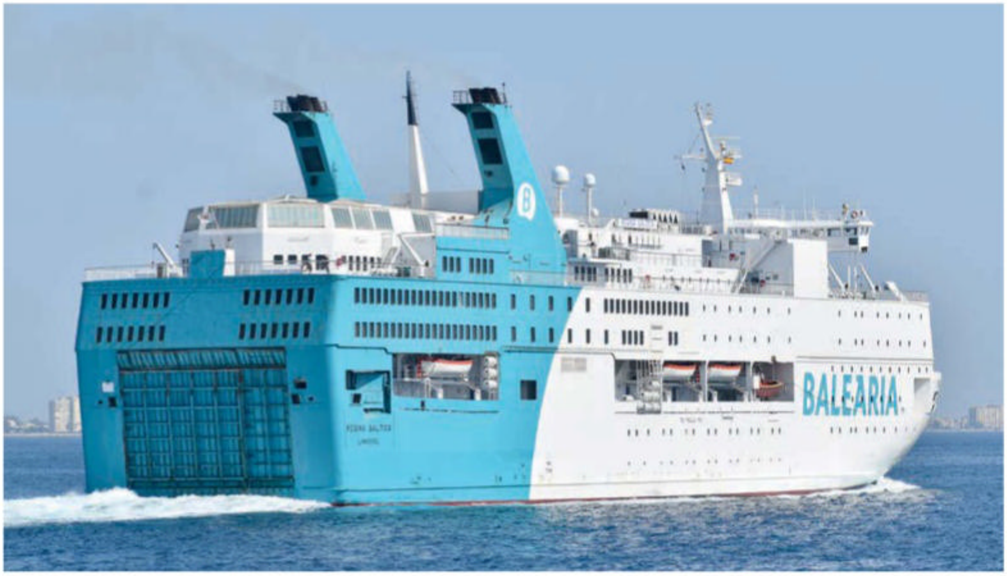


▲ **Regina Baltica in her Tallink livery off Tallinn in August 2005. After five years with Estline, she was operated by Tallink from 2001 to 2009.** MARITIME PHOTOGRAPHIC

▶ **Regina Baltica in Tallinn port at Terminal D in March 2005. The Tallinn–Stockholm service became a part of Tallink in 2001.** JOHN PAGNI

▼ **Sailing for Baleària, Regina Baltica departing Algeciras for Tanger Med in October 2022.** MATT DAVIES

TALLINK
REGINA BALTICA



Braemar, Newcastle replaced Harwich as the UK terminal. At the end of the year Fred. Olsen sold its passenger ferry operations to Color Line.

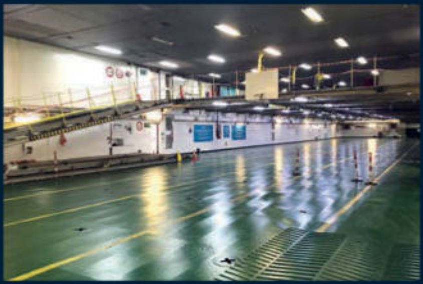
Braemar was excluded, her routes closed, and the vessel was chartered to the Baltic Shipping Company, Russia. Initially renamed *Baltica*, then *Anna Karenina*, she sailed on the St Petersburg-Nynäshamn-Kiel route from 1991 until 1996, when financial problems forced her withdrawal. Returning to Fred. Olsen, she was laid up in Hamburg under the abbreviated name *Anna K*.

Later in 1996 she was acquired by Nordström & Thulin, Stockholm and renamed *Regina Baltica*, the name she has carried ever since. She was deployed on the Estline's Stockholm-Tallinn service in which N&T were partners along with the Estonian Shipping Company ESCO. The Estonians subsequently took over Estline

ON BOARD REGINA BALTICA

PHOTOS BY MATT DAVIES

▲ The fully enclosed bridge.

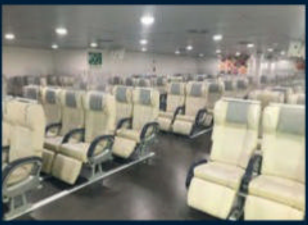

▲ The upper vehicle deck, with mezzanine deck.

▲ The amphitheatre on the outside sun deck.

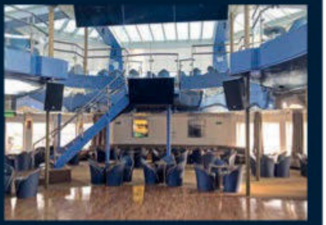
In October 2022 Regina Baltica temporarily moved to the Algeciras-Tanger Med route to provide refit cover allowing the author to finally get on board. Foot passengers boarded in Tanger Med over the stern, via the twin deck drive-through vehicle decks; her 1,000 lane metres is no longer large in terms of ferry capacity.

- Passengers are greeted by Moroccan Purser Mohammed. Regina Baltica sails under the Cypriot Flag and is crewed by Spanish Officers, an international deck crew and Moroccan hotel staff to ensure the needs of North African passengers including Halal diets are well catered for.
- An escalator leads up from level 2 on the vehicle deck directly to reception on deck 7. The 11 decks are numbered 0 to 10, as follows:
- Deck 0 contains the machinery and plant rooms.
- Deck 1 is now disused and contains cabins forward, along with the pool, sauna and bar, while aft are machinery rooms.
- Decks 2 and 3 are the main vehicle decks, with the side areas on deck 3 containing cabins.
- Decks 4 and 5 are the upper vehicle decks; there are cabins forward in the side areas on both levels; the car mezzanine is on 5.
- Decks 6 and 7 have cabins midships and forward and passenger facilities aft.
- Deck 6 contains the reception, shop and a large recliner lounge, along with a cafeteria and twin recliner lounges far aft.
- Deck 7 contains the Pub Pioneros to port and the Restaurant l'Almadrava to starboard, with the full width Self Service Restaurant far aft.
- Decks 8 and 9 have crew accommodation midships and forward, flanked by side promenades, as well as a forward viewing deck, with the Bar Náutico and Bar Galeón, forming a night club between the funnels on deck 8 and the two-storey Café Salón atrium aft on decks 8 and 9.
- Deck 10 is the highest deck and contains the bridge.
- Regina Baltica essentially retains the basic interior layout as she had when she was built, although several facilities have been repurposed over the years. Deck 7 is the most modified area; the once large duty free shop in the centre has been converted into a large recliner lounge without external windows, and the original disco, Steakhouse and Grill Bar are now an enlarged Cafeteria.
- Original Viking Line décor remains on deck 8, principally in the Self Service Restaurant area. When the ship was built, this area was separate from the adjoining à la carte and buffet restaurants, and here the chairs are original, though re-covered, as are the distinctive large brass light fittings.
- Heavily modified is the adjacent Pub Pioneros and Restaurant l'Almadrava on deck 8. Originally it was a large bar with a dance floor spanning the full width of the ship, but has now been split.
- On deck 9 the original single-storey nightclub, which had an adjacent conference area, was rebuilt as the two-storey atrium bar by Fred. Olsen, who also added the two disco bars situated between the funnels.
- Another addition was the outside tiered amphitheatre, forward of the funnels, which is used for summer events. Sadly, the forward viewing deck on deck 8, overlooked by the bridge, is permanently closed off, as, being so high, it is very exposed, so it can rarely be used safely.
- Down on deck 1, the pool, sauna and bar, long out of use, is still instantly recognisable from the ship's Viking Line days and even features the original chairs and bar stools.

▲ The Pub Pioneros on deck 7.


▲ One of three reclining seat lounges.

▲ Viking Line décor in the Restaurant.


▲ Café Salon with two-storey atrium.

and acquired *Regina Baltica* in 1997. Estline was a joint ship company founded in 1989 and which went bankrupt in 2001.

A further ownership change came in 2001 when Tallink took control, and from 2004 calls at Mariehamn were added to ensure duty-free sales continued. In 2006 *Regina Baltica* was replaced by *Romantika* and moved to the Stockholm-Riga route, replacing the 1980-built *Fantaasia* (ex-*Turella*, *Stena Nordica*, *Lion King*) and switching from Estonian to Latvian registry. *Regina Baltica* was withdrawn by Tallink in April 2009, replaced once again by *Romantika*.

Regina Baltica found herself surplus to requirements, and the summers of 2009, 2010 and 2011 were spent chartered to Acciona Trasmediterránea, sailing between Almeria and Nador, with winters spent laid up in Riga. In May 2010 *Regina Baltica* briefly operated on Acciona Trasmediterránea's Algeciras-Tanger route, while in September 2010 a month-long charter to Strandfaraskip Landsins, the government agency for public transport in the Faroe Islands, took place, with the ship operating between Tvøroyri and Tórshavn.

ACCOMMODATION

Between 2012 and 2017 Regina Baltica was used as an accommodation vessel, initially chartered out by Tallink until being sold to a charterer, SweOffshore, in 2015, having by then been fitted with a

▲ **The Bridge viewed from the forward viewing deck.** MATT DAVIES

▲ **Regina Baltica has spacious side promenades outside.** MATT DAVIES

large helipad structure at the bow. During 2012 she was anchored off Sheringham, on the Norfolk coast, supporting wind farm construction work, and in 2013 she was used at the Bard Offshore1 windfarm in Germany.

From 2014 to 2017 she was in Lerwick harbour, Shetland, being used as a base for construction workers. When the latter ceased, SweOffshore put *Regina Baltica* up for sale and she was acquired in 2017 by Baleària, who recommissioned her as a ferry in Vigo.

Unusually, *Regina Baltica* kept her name when placed onto a new Spain-Algeria route, sailing from Valencia to Mostaganem weekly or twice-weekly, with a crossing time of 15 hours. Until recently, *Regina Baltica* rarely strayed from the Algeria route, other than for an occasional extra Valencia-Palma summer peak crossing, usually at short notice.

The closure of Spain to Morocco traffic during the Covid pandemic saw Baleària open a Sète-Nador route in August 2020 with *Regina Baltica* moving to the route in 2022. Here, her greater capacity and onboard facilities have proved to be ideal, with two Sète-Nador trips typically made every eight days. The crossings take 36 hours and involve two nights at sea.

PERFECT FIT

It is easy to see why Baleària purchased *Regina Balticain* 2017, despite her then being 37 years of age. The vessel is a perfect fit for the overnight African routes, on which her high passenger and car capacity proves ideal, along with a good number of reclining seats and cabins, and a sufficient range of catering outlets for a full passenger complement. In summer, *Regina Baltica* frequently sails full on the Algerian and Moroccan routes, with all the cabins in use.

Regina Baltic will serve the Sète-Nador route full-time again this summer, after spending this winter making a daily round-trip between Almeria and Nador, in between fortnightly French sailings. *Regina Baltica* is still in excellent condition and is well maintained. With plentiful outside deck space, including wide promenades and cruise-style facilities, she is a classic Baltic cruise ferry and a delight to travel on – a real Baltic Beauty in the Med! SM

■ *With thanks to Pilar Boxand Enric Abenoza at Baleària for assistance in preparing this feature and to the Captain and crew of Regina Baltica for the hospitality shown onboard.*

Regina Baltica heads out into the bay of Gibraltar bound for Tanger Med. MATT DAVIES

ELIZABETH'S NAVY

70 YEARS OF THE POST-WAR ROYAL NAVY

Paul Brown assesses the many significant changes to the Royal Navy during the second Elizabethan age.

Over the course of the 70-year reign of Queen Elizabeth II, the Royal Navy changed out of all recognition. Its status as a superpower navy with worldwide bases and operations was eclipsed, but it remained a powerful force because of its potency, if not its size.

The first four decades were dominated by the Cold War, while the wars and conflicts during the whole era included the Korean War, the Suez invasion, the Indonesian confrontation, the Cod Wars, the Falklands War, two Gulf Wars, the Balkan wars and the Libya crisis.

In 1952 the UK was still a global and maritime superpower with a large empire. It had the world's second largest navy, the largest shipbuilding industry and the largest merchant fleet. The vast networks of seaborne trade routes linking dominions, colonies, and traditional trading partners (such as in South America and the Middle East) were policed by a Navy whose size and versatility meant that it was able to engage independently in most types of conflict. It operated 328 warships of frigate or submarine size or above, of which 147 were in reserve, and had over 400 smaller ships.

▲ The last British battleship, Vanguard, served in the Mediterranean and Home Fleets in the early 1950s, and headed the lines at the 1953 Coronation Fleet Review. She was reduced to reserve in 1955 and scrapped in 1960.

▼ The Colossus class aircraft carrier Ocean. Her aircraft flew 7,964 sorties during the Korean War. Her Sea Furies were attacked by eight MIG15s, with one or possibly two MIGs downed, the only occasion when a piston-engined aircraft has shot down a jet.

Squadrons were distributed among five overseas fleets and stations, as well as in home waters. The home dockyards of Chatham, Devonport, Portsmouth, Rosyth and Sheerness were augmented by overseas dockyards in Malta, Singapore, Trincomalee and Simonstown, and bases at Portland, Harwich, the Clyde, Londonderry, Bermuda, Bahrain and Hong Kong.

Seventy years later, in 2022, the UK's superpower role was much diminished, and its empire gone. The nation's shipbuilding industry and merchant fleet were shadows of their former selves. There had been a dramatic reduction in the size of the Royal Navy, and its status as a major navy, with worldwide operations, had been lost. Spending on defence had diminished from 11 per cent of GDP (in 1952) to 2.5 per cent.

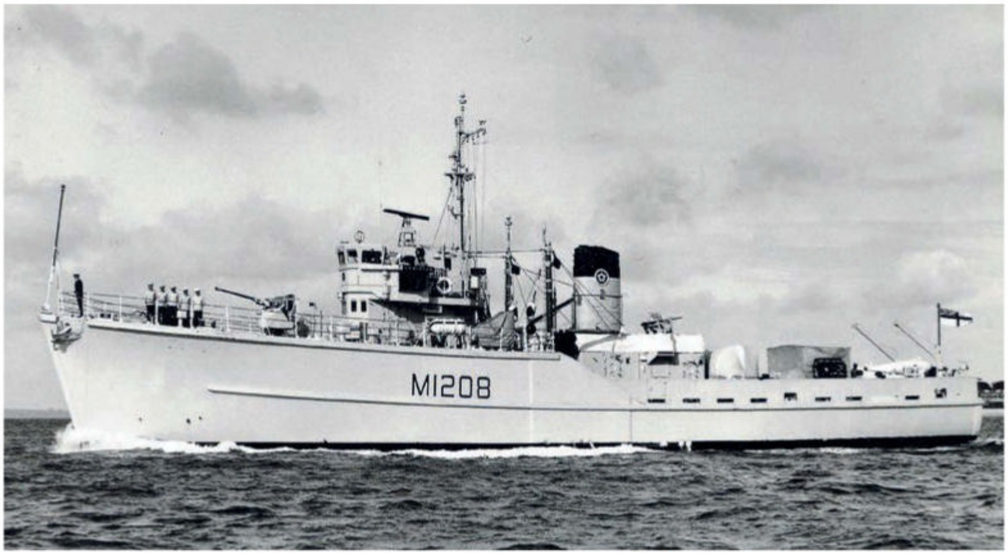
THE BIG NAVY

In 1952 the two big fleets, Home and Mediterranean, would deploy on several cruises a year, visiting the more exotic and attractive ports. It was different in the Far East because the Korean War was on, so a substantial fleet, including aircraft carriers and cruisers, was engaged in patrols and combat off the Korean coast.

In February 1952 British warships on station in the Korean war theatre included the aircraft carrier *Glory*, the maintenance carrier *Unicorn*, the cruisers *Belfast* and *Ceylon*, the destroyers *Charity*, *Cockade*, *Concord*, *Constance* and *Cossack*, the frigates *Alacrity*, *Cardigan Bay*, *Mounts Bay* and *Whitesand Bay*, the hospital ship *Maine*, and the headquarters ship *Ladybird*. The aircraft carrier *Warrior* was employed in carrying troops, replacement aircraft and stores from the UK to Singapore and Japan.

In all, 34 Royal Navy warships (including four aircraft carriers and six cruisers) took part in the war, as well as 16 RFAs, one hospital ship, nine Royal Australian Navy ships (including one aircraft carrier), eight destroyers of the Royal Canadian Navy

▲ The CO class destroyer Cossack served in the 8th Destroyer Squadron on the Far East station during the 1950s. During the Korean War she patrolled off the west coast of Korea as part of the allied task force.

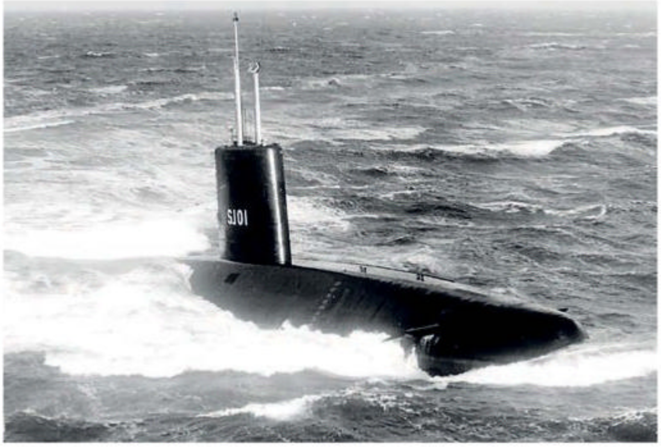


▲ Completed in 1960, Lewiston was the last of 116 wooden-hulled Ton class minesweepers built for the Royal Navy. She is seen in her original form, with an enclosed bridge, one 40mm gun and twin 20mm guns.

and six frigates of the Royal New Zealand Navy. The Cold War was intensifying, with the USSR building up a large submarine fleet, and it seemed that the Atlantic might again become a theatre of conflict. Thus, the role of NATO, in which the UK was second only to the USA, was becoming more important, with exercises conducted regularly by multilateral forces.

Royal Navy personnel totalled 153,000 in 1952, and no women served at sea. This compared with 33,750 in July 2022, when women, who made up 11 per cent of personnel, were serving in both surface ships and submarines. Most of the ships serving in 1952 had been built during World War II, but there was still a small contingent of pre-war ships, including cruisers and auxiliaries. The surface warships were mostly steam-powered: steam turbines in the larger ships (from destroyer size up) and steam reciprocating engines in many frigates and most smaller ships.

The armament of these ships comprised guns, torpedoes and anti-submarine mortars. Sensor outfits, including radar, sonar and high-frequency direction finders, were fairly rudimentary. The era of the battleship had been eclipsed, with just *Vanguard* remaining in service. Submarines were diesel- and electric-powered and armed with torpedoes and, in some cases, a gun.



▲ Dreadnought was the first British nuclear-powered submarine and was completed in1963. She had a submerged speed of 28 knots and a surface speed of 20 knots. In March 1971 she became the first British submarine to surface at the North Pole.

In the 1960s the newly upgraded Far East Fleet became more important, at the expense of the Mediterranean Fleet. In 1963 there was a rapid build-up in naval forces to deal with the Indonesian infiltration of Malaysia: the aircraft carriers *Ark Royal*, *Eagle*, *Victorious*, *Centaur* and *Hermes* and commando carriers *Albion* and *Bulwark* were all deployed, in a conflict which lasted three years.

RN ships employed during the conflict included five aircraft carriers, two commando carriers, one cruiser, four guided missile destroyers, six other destroyers, 16 frigates, seven submarines, 18 minesweepers, four seaward defence boats, and six other warships, as well as RFAs. By early 1965 the Far East fleet consisted of some 80 ships, including RFAs and Commonwealth Navy warships, an all-time high, and the largest fleet in the Navy, headed by the carriers *Victorious* and *Eagle*.

FALKLANDS AND AFTER

The 1982 Falklands war presented the biggest challenge to the RN during Elizabeth's reign. A large task force was sent to the South Atlantic to reclaim the islands that had been invaded by Argentina. The conflict lasted 72 days and claimed the lives of 236 British and 649 Argentinian servicemen, plus 19 British civilians from the Merchant Navy, and RFA and islanders. It was the largest naval and air combat operation between modern forces since the end of World War II. Reclaiming the islands was a remarkable achievement for the British forces, which had had to organise an 8,000-mile logistical train, and were pitched against powerful and determined air forces. The

The Leander class frigate Argonaut was modernised in Devonport Dockyard in the late 1970s and equipped with Exocet missiles. In the Falklands conflict she was damaged by two bombs dropped by Argentinian Skyhawks.
CROWN COPYRIGHT/OGL

Royal Navy lost five ships: the destroyers *Sheffield* and *Coventry*, the frigates *Ardent* and *Antelope*, and the landing ship *Sir Galahad*, as well as the requisitioned transport *Atlantic Conveyor*. There were many lessons learned from the conflict, perhaps the most important being the need to improve radar and weapon systems (and the training of their operators) to enable them to cope more effectively with fast sea-skimming missiles like Exocets, fast and low-flying aircraft over sea and aircraft flying low over land.

The requirement for effective close-in weapon systems, as a last-ditch defence against aircraft and missiles which got through the outer rings of defence, was also highlighted. Many of the cuts planned in the 1981 Defence Review were reversed, allowing the Navy to keep all three Invincible class aircraft carriers and the two Fearless class assault ships.

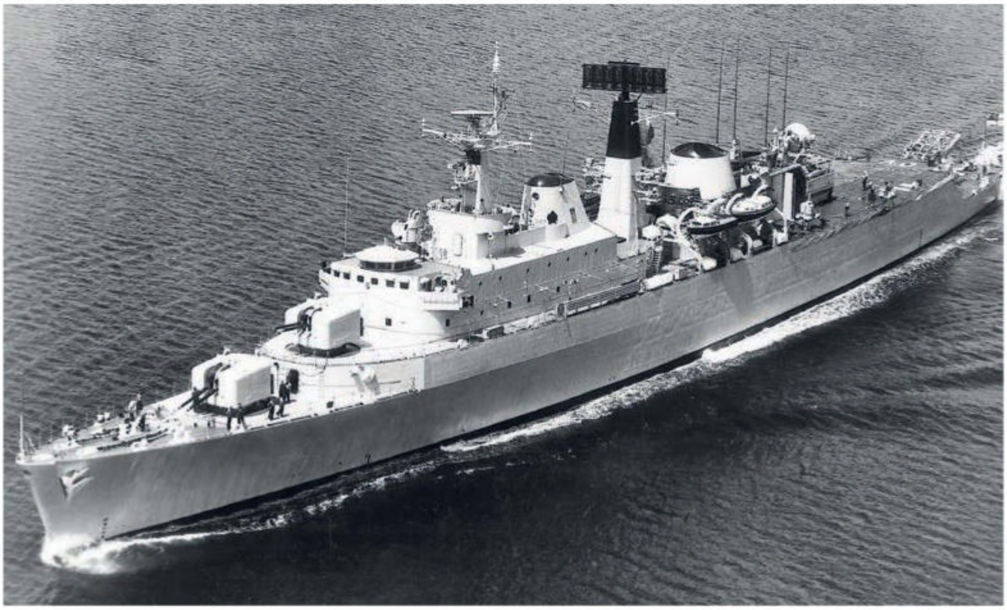
The Cold War threat shaped the Navy until 1990, and helped ensure that the fleet was maintained at a reasonable size in the 1970s and 1980s. After that the 'peace dividend' led to frequent 'salami slicing' of the fleet's size. The threat from Russia was returning 20 years later, its military collapse having been reversed since 2008, with massive increases in defence spending. The start of the Ukraine war in 2022 may have marked the start of a new cold war, and has revitalised NATO and European security consciousness and had a unifying effect on the West.

OVERSTRETCH

By 2022 the fleet was reduced to 31 warships of frigate or submarine size or above, which included two large strike aircraft carriers and the strategic nuclear deterrent of four Trident-armed submarines. The Navy had a much-reduced capacity to protect trade routes, its commitment in the Persian Gulf being a rare example of this.

Having long since retreated from its powerbase in the Indo-Pacific regions, the Navy was now trying to re-establish a modest presence there, with two patrol ships on station and periodic task group deployments to the area. This reflected concerns about the growing military might of China, which was seen as a potential and formidable threat to global security.

The Navy's NATO role in the eastern Atlantic remained a dominant commitment. An RN presence in a few small British Overseas Territories was



still required – in Gibraltar, the Falklands and the Caribbean. The Navy could not mount an independent operation of the size seen in the 1982 Falklands conflict, not least because it lacked the numbers of surface escorts and submarines required. Thus, in any major conflict, it would have to rely on its allies to complement its resources.

However, what it lacks in numbers of ships the Navy partly compensates for through the potency of its forces, which include two large aircraft carriers and nuclear-powered submarines, which can launch nuclear-armed ballistic missiles or cruise missiles and torpedoes, and it has managed to cling on to an amphibious warfare force. There is, however, a need for more escorts and attack submarines to make a balanced force.

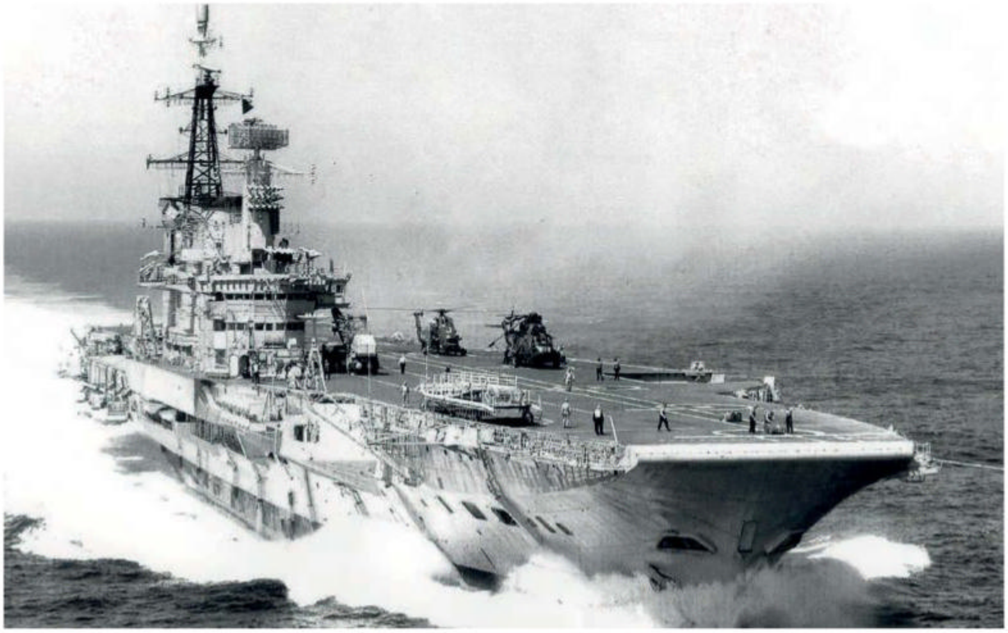
Guided missiles are now the main armament of the larger surface ships and are complemented by guns, homing torpedoes and helicopter-borne weapons. Sensors and systems, such as radar, sonar and electronic warfare systems, are highly sophisticated and complement the computerised automated weapon systems.

Most of the larger surface ships have gas turbine propulsion, and all the submarines are nuclear-powered. The ships are of varying ages: some Type 23 frigates, the remaining Trafalgar class submarine and the Hunt class minehunters are over 30 years old. Replacement of ships and submarines with new vessels comes at a glacial pace, with craft often being delivered years behind schedule, as with the Astute class submarines. If the seventh and last boat is completed on time in 2026, the commissioning of the class will have been spread over 16 years.

The first Type 26 frigate, *Glasgow*, will have taken ten years to build if it is completed on schedule in 2027, and the last of the eight ships will not

▲ **Devonshire, the lead ship of the County class guided missile destroyers, was equipped with Sea Slug and Seacat air-defence missiles. She is seen during her second commission, when she was deployed to the Far East, 1965-66.**

▶ **The aircraft carriers Prince of Wales (foreground) and Queen Elizabeth were assembled at Rosyth and commissioned in 2017 and 2019 respectively, replacing the three smaller Invincible class carriers.** CROWN COPYRIGHT/OGL



▼ **The aircraft carrier Hermes served as a helicopter carrier in the seventies. She had been completed in 1959, being equipped with a fully-angled flight deck, steam catapults, mirror landing aids and Type 984 radar.** CROWN COPYRIGHT/OGL

be completed until 2037. The last of five Type 31 frigates, ordered in 2019, will probably not be completed until 2030. The current minehunters, which double as patrol vessels, are not being replaced with ships capable of such roles, but instead autonomous systems are being deployed in small launches. Thus, the number of seagoing ships is being further reduced.

Government talk of a bigger Royal Navy has yet to translate into anything tangible. After more than 70 years of steep decline any increase in size seems likely, at best, to be very modest. Five more frigates, of Type 32, was the stated aim by the mid-2030s, but the funding for both these and the planned multi-role support ships has now been suspended. We can only ponder what the next 70 years will bring, not just whether the Navy will be bigger or smaller, but what the effects of technological change will be, with modular shipborne systems, unmanned aerial, surface and submarine vehicles, laser weapons, electromagnetic rail guns and hypersonic missiles already in the development stages.

■ *Paul Brown's latest book, Elizabeth's Navy: Seventy Years of the Post-war Royal Navy, was published on 13 April 2023.*

DECLINING SIZE OF THE ROYAL NAVY

YEAR	MAJOR WARSHIPS*
1952	328
1960	210
1970	127
1980	105
1990	82
2000	55
2010	42
2022	31

*Frigate or submarine size and above.

▲ **The Swiftsure class nuclear submarine Sceptre in the Clyde area in 1996. She was commissioned in 1978 and served until 2010. In 1981 she suffered extensive damage in a collision with a Soviet submarine.** CROWN COPYRIGHT/OGL

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SHIPSPOTTING

The German cruise line AIDA Cruises was founded in the early 1960s and, since 2003, has been part of Carnival Corporation. Based in Rostock, AIDA caters primarily to the German-speaking market, and currently operates 12 ships.

AIDA CRUISES

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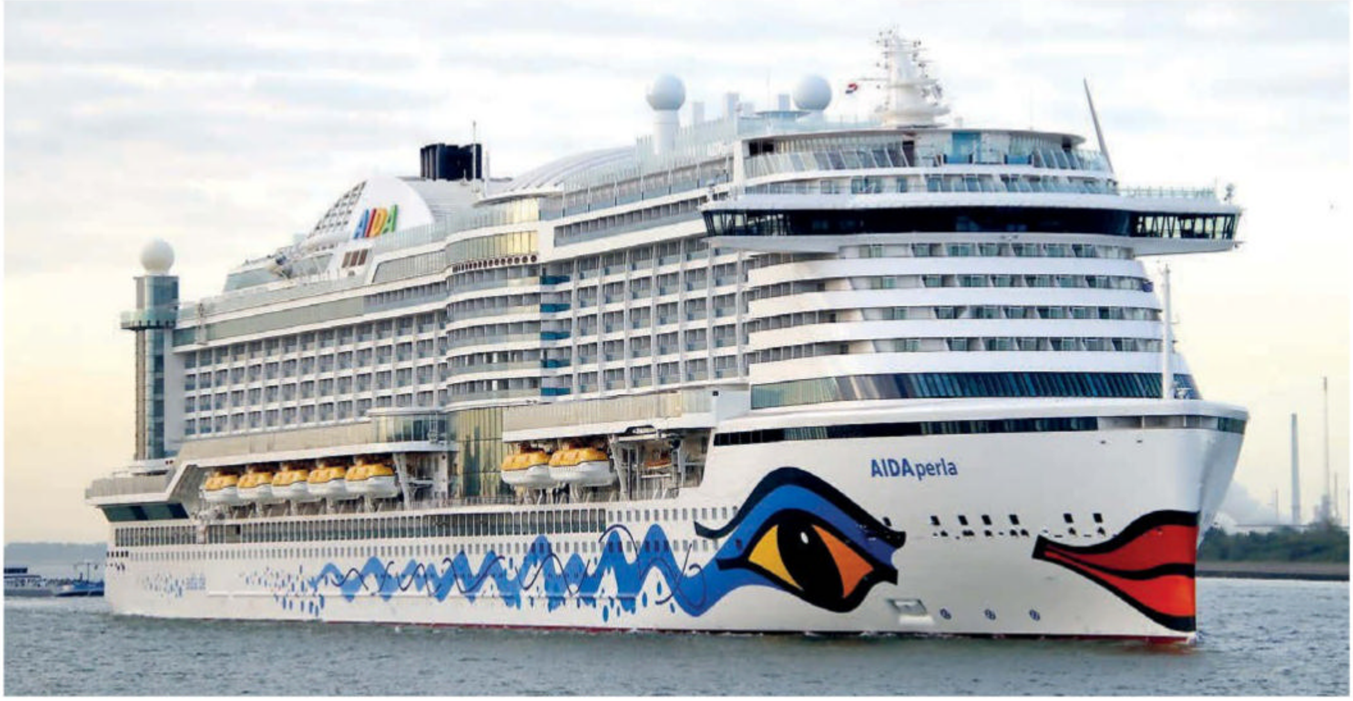

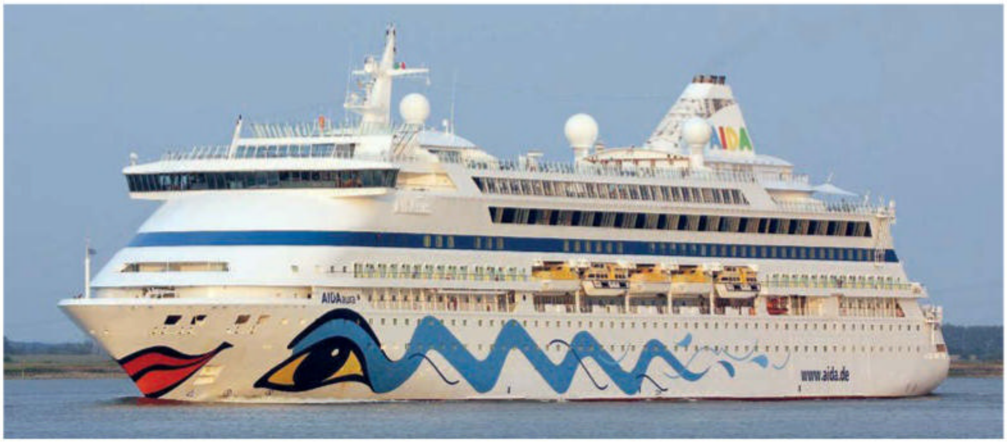

▲ Delivered on 27 April 2017 from Mitsubishi Shipbuilding at Nagasaki, AIDAperla (125.571gt) entered service on 28 May 2017. Pictured in the Nieuwe Waterweg in May 2022, she has 1,643 cabins and capacity for 3,286 passengers double occupancy. ARNOLD POHEN

◀ The 2003-built AIDAaura (42,289gt) on the River Elbe at Stadersand, Germany, 28 July 2019; she is the oldest ship in the Costa fleet and will the decommissioned in the autumn. ULF KORNFELD

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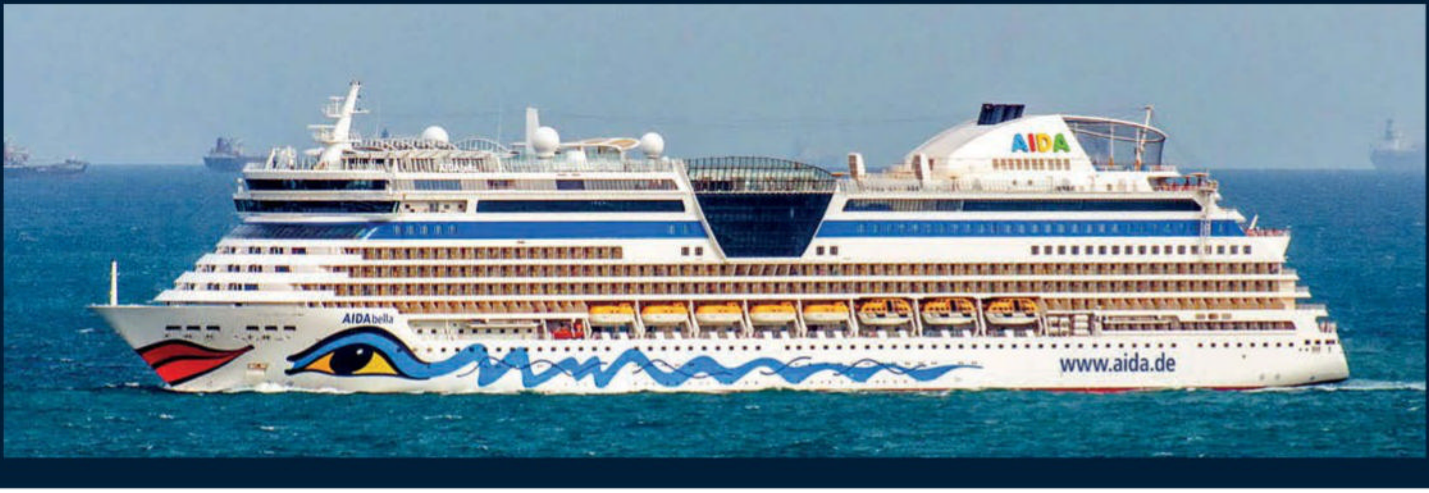
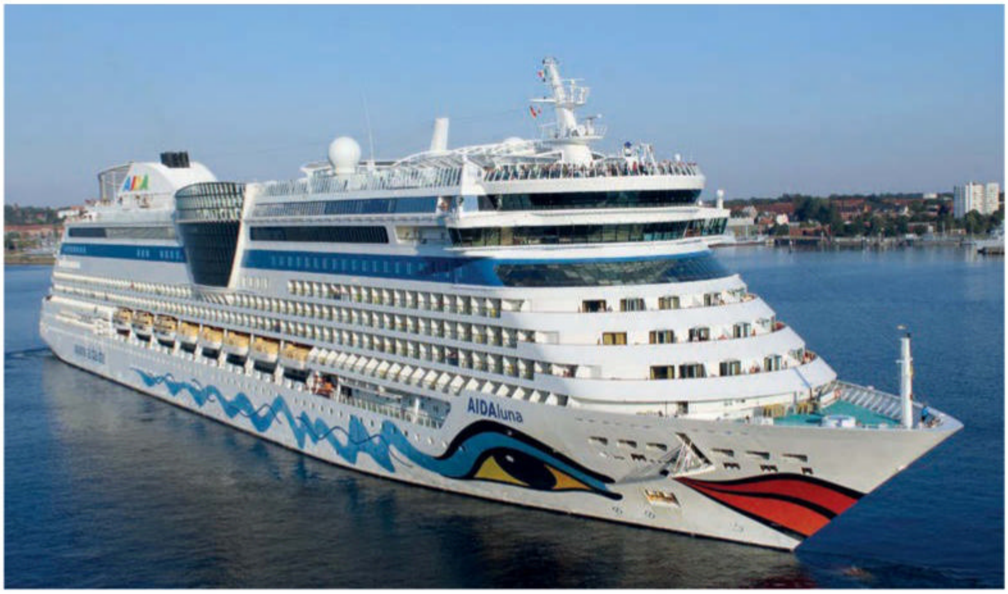
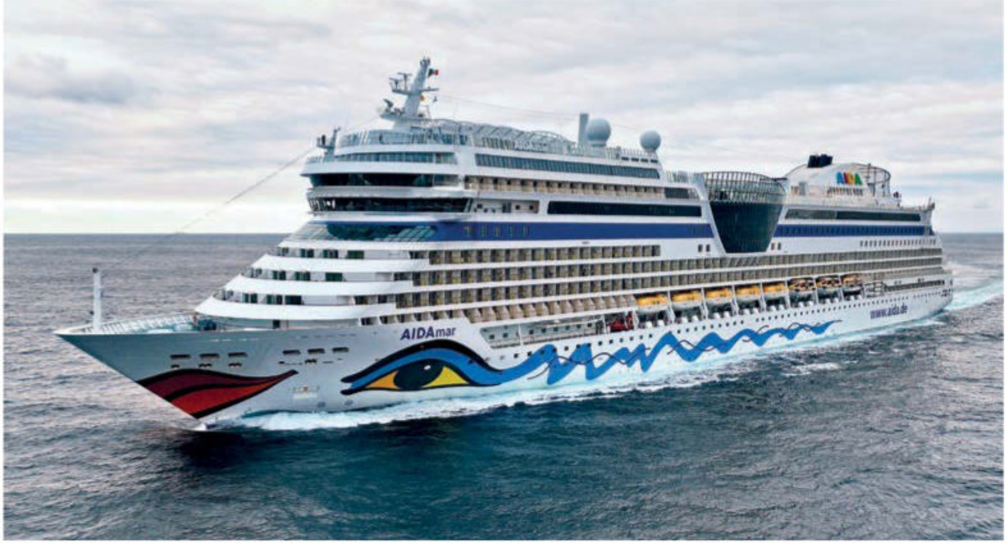


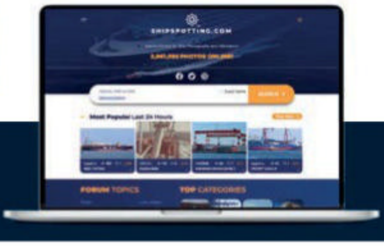
▲ **The 2008-built AIDAbella (69,203gt) passing through the Malacca Strait on 11 January 2019. Built by Meyer Werft, Papenburg as a sistership to AIDAdiva and AIDAluna, she has a circular, glass-walled and -roofed Theatrium amidships.** IVAN MESHKOV



◀ **The 2008-built Sphinx class ship AIDAluna (69,203gt) leaving the cruise terminal at Kiel in September 2021. She was the third out of a series of six ships ordered from Meyer Werft.** PIETER INPIJN



◀ **The 2012-built AIDAmar (71,304gt) entering Port Phillip Bay on the coast of southern Victoria, Australia. Christened in Hamburg on 12 May 2012, she has recently been operating western Mediterranean itineraries from Hamburg and Cherbourg to Portugal.** OWEN FOLEY



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SERVING ON BOARD ELLERMAN'S BIG FOUR

letter of the month

The article about Ellerman's Big Four (SM, Feb, p.28), as they were known, was very interesting as I had three days of interviews on City of Port Elizabeth before joining Ellerman Lines as an Engineer Cadet in 1960. I sailed as Second Engineer on City of Durban and City of Exeter in the late 1960s.

A couple of incidents on Exeter stick in my mind. We were on passage down the Thames to Rotterdam, Las Palmas and South Africa when we had a problem with the starboard engine and had to stop for about eight hours to fix it. When we got under way again, I went on deck about 0600 and encountered a couple of elderly passengers who looked at the lights on the shore and said we must have made good time overnight to get to Rotterdam so early. They looked somewhat crestfallen when I had to tell them that the lights they were looking at were those at Southend, not Rotterdam.

Later that day I was standing by the engine controls with the Third Engineer discussing how much faster we dare run the engines to try and recover a little time. Without any warning both engine telegraphs went to double ring (emergency) full astern. We managed to get the engines stopped, but emptied the starting air bottles in the process. So, when the telegraphs went to half ahead, we had to wait to get the system sufficiently recharged to restart the engines ahead. I was hoping that there were not going to be too many days like that during the voyage and was relieved on our arrival in Rotterdam. I rejoined the vessel when she returned from South Africa and heard that the trip had been uneventful.

City of Durban in her prime.

Those four vessels which entered service in the early 1950s were undoubtedly good-looking and successful, but less than 20 years on they were overtaken by events and were outdated. After being sold to Greek interests, two underwent major modifications and continued trading as ferries, but I would be surprised if the statement that 'all their machinery was left unchanged' is correct.

Surely the electrical generating capacity would have had to be greatly increased and those Thimble Tube boilers could not have been kept going much longer? Having a couple of donor Doxford engines to raid for spares from City of Port Elizabeth would have have helped to keep the engines going as, by the 1980s, the supply of spares would have been drying up.

Tim Gibbs, Bideford

Pride of Bilbao

What a delight to see that the P&O ship on which I served as Second Engineer during the millennium celebrations, Pride of Bilbao, has had a full refit and, after 36 years of service, continues in full service (SM, Feb). It was somewhat amusing that, during my six-year stint on her, I served with a fellow Engineer who casually stated that the vessel was equipped with the French-built SEMT Pielstick engines, and he stated that SEMT stood for 'Simple Engineering Made Tricky'.

David Parnell
St Briavels, Gloucs

RMS Queen Elizabeth

Due to falling passenger numbers in the latter stages of her career as a North Atlantic liner, RMS Queen Elizabeth was periodically diverted to cruising. I have been handed paperwork from one such cruise, to the West Indies in January 1967. This saw the ship head from New York to St Thomas, Curaçao, Trinidad and Martinique. The captain was Commodore G.T. Marr, DSC, RD. The material includes a welcome aboard, daily programmes, breakfast, luncheon and dinner menus.

I feel this material would be best placed in the archives of a Cunard historian, or with someone who has a particular interest. If any readers are Cunard enthusiasts wishing to be custodians of this paperwork, I am happy to mail it to them.

Barry Mitchell, Bridlington
coastlinepress@talktalk.net

All-inclusive cruises not quite what they seem

With regard to the news item about 'Cutting back on stewards' (SM, Feb), on my last cruise I had a deal described as: 'Drinks Package, free wi-fi and Pre-Paid gratuities included'. My understanding was that, with this drinks package, all drinks were free with the exception of brand name spirits.

So, if you ordered a gin and tonic, as long as the 'house' gin was used, the drink was free, but if you ordered a gin and tonic and specified a brand, you would have to pay. I also assumed that there would be no gratuities to pay once on board.

So on the first night I ordered a Baileys and was surprised to be charged $1.20. When I queried this, I was told that only the first $9 worth of the drink was free, so, as a Baileys cost $10, I had to pay the difference. The bar staff automatically added a 20 per cent gratuity. When I spoke to Guest Services the following day, I was told that the travel agent had inadvertently misled me and the drinks package in my booking did not exist.

When I complained to the cruise company about this because I had pre-paid gratuities, I was told that the 'Pre-Paid option only applied to the cabin stewards, cleaners, catering staff etc, that is, the staff that the majority of guests would not see. It did not apply to bar staff, who added 20 per cent gratuity to all purchases. So, a package of 'pre-paid gratuities' does not cover all gratuities, just some of them.

In answer to the question posed in the article as to where the 20 per cent gratuity goes, I suspect that the cruise company takes a cut to cover administration. My advice to anyone booking a cruise is to make sure you are certain, prior to boarding, what is 'free' and what has been pre-paid. The terms are obviously open to interpretation by the cruise companies, travel agents and members of Guest Services.

David Watson
Oxfordshire

Ferry routes

Do other readers agree that when looking at the ferry routes around Europe it is quite astounding that there are no longer any direct passenger links between the UK and Scandinavia? This is in stark contrast to how things were 20 or 30 years ago and is surely leading to enormous extra road miles across both the UK and Europe, as well as additional air travel. Surely some routes here would be commercially viable? And if not, they should be subsidised on environmental grounds. They also make great mini-cruise breaks.

Mark Thompson
Carlisle

Saint John not St John's

The January 2023 edition was another fine issue, especially the White Star's Olympic Class article. However, I feel I should point out that some transatlantic ocean liners going directly to Halifax NS went on to Saint John, New Brunswick, not St John's, Newfoundland, which was considerably out of the way and not connected to the Canadian mainland.

This inaccuracy occurs twice, in

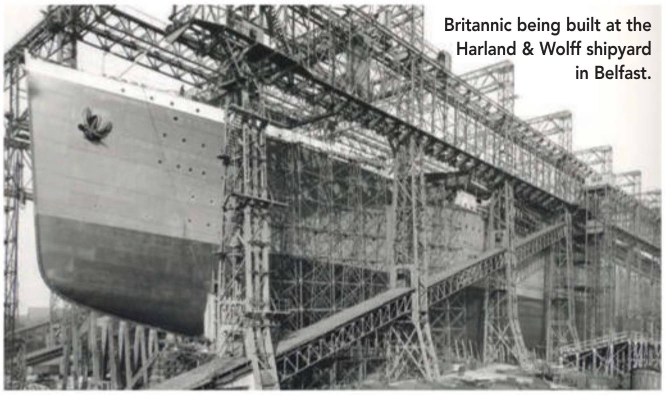
View from the Bridge (p.60) and in November's Mystery (p.63). The main exception to this routing was the Furness line, which had a Liverpool-St John's-Halifax-Boston service (not calling at Saint John).

Peter Dawes
Edmonton AB, Canada

Steel and rivets

The article White Star's Olympic class: Myth and Reality (SM, Jan) confused me with respect to the references to the possible use of brittle materials and poor workmanship. Steel fails in a low energy mode at low temperatures and a high energy mode at higher temperatures. The transition temperature is dependent on the presence of trace elements in the steel and it would not have been unusual for the transition temperature to be between freezing point and room temperature in steels used to build the Titanic.

In addition, the inclusions present in the wrought iron used for the rivets would have provided crack initiation points. Impact loading would have exacerbated the problem. This phenomenon would have been unknown to the designers and workmen building Titanic. I believe that some rivets recovered from Titanic have a relatively high transition temperature, by today's standards. Therefore, when the Titanic hit the iceberg with a glancing blow, the rivets failed easily in the low energy mode. This led to a large number of compartments flooding, sealing the liner's fate.


Britannic being built at the Harland & Wolff shipyard in Belfast.

The problems associated with using steel with a high transition temperature in ships was not understood until after World War II. The use of welded construction meant that cracks growing from welding flaws in ships operating in low temperatures could run round a ship, splitting it in two.

There is a well-known photograph of the T2 tanker Schenectady split in two in her fitting-out berth. Other ships operating in the North Atlantic were not so lucky. The problem only really became acute after the introduction of welded construction because in a riveted ship there is massive redundancy. If initiated, a crack would stop at the edge of a plate rather than continuing to run across the weld to the adjacent plate. A few popped rivets would not normally be a problem in a riveted ship.

The failure of welded ships in World War II led to a large research programme to understand the problem of the potential for catastrophic failure initiated from small defects in steel structures. This is now the discipline of Fracture Mechanics and is still the subject of active research throughout the world. So, the problem of the use of brittle materials would not have been understood at the time of the building of Titanic, even if it was understood as a problem at all.

Bob Gates
Backwell, North Somerset

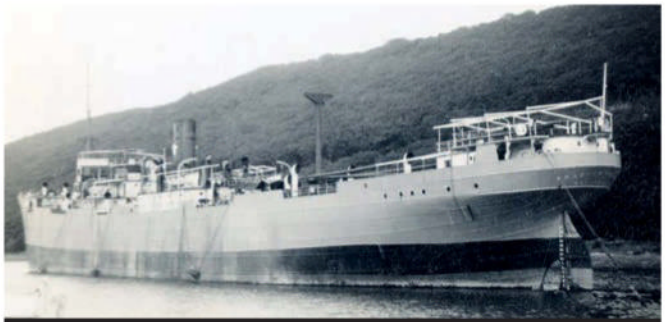
Forth not the Clyde

Regarding the news item Dual fuel crude tanker enters service (SM, Feb), the tanker's berth at Hound Point is actually on the Forth, not the Clyde.

Iain McGeachy, Edinburgh

Write to Ships Mail, Ships Monthly, Kelsey Media, The Granary, Downs Court, Yalding Hill, Yalding, Kent ME18 6AL, or email sm.ed@kelsey.co.uk. Please note that letters via email must enclose sender's full postal address. Contributions to Ships Monthly must be exclusive and must not be sent to other publications. The editor reserves the right to edit material. Kelsey Media reserves the right to reuse any submission in any format.

MYSTERY SHIP



FEBRUARY'S MYSTERY

The mystery ship is Arabian Prince, built in 1918-19 by William Pickersgill of Sunderland. The 5,760gt ship measured 405ft by 52.3ft and was powered by a Richardson-built triple expansion engine of 546nhp, which gave her a speed of 11 knots.

In 1927 she was sold to Z Steamship Co and renamed Zenada. In 1933 she was sold to Livanos Bros and renamed Nestos. In 1935 she changed owners again, this time to Theofano Maritime Co. The ship was wrecked in 1941 at East Hoyle Bank, six miles south of Mersey Lightvessel while en route from New Orleans to Garston Dock with a cargo of sulphur.

John Jordan, Cloyne

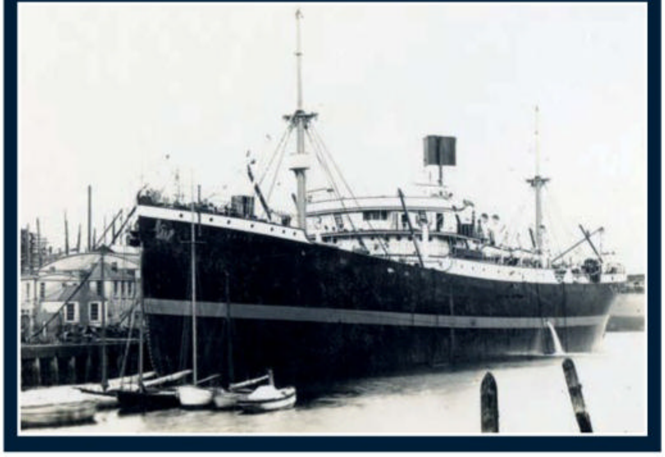
I think the mystery ship is the Prince Line vessel Arabian Prince (5,764grt), built by Wm Pickersgill & Sons in 1919. The location could be the River Fal, where many Prince Line ships were laid up in the 1920s and 1930s. Prince Line was founded by James Knott of Howdon Newcastle in 1878.

Peter Somerville, Greenock

THIS MONTH'S MYSTERY SHIP

This month's mystery shows an old single-funnelled passenger vessel, but the name is illegible. The ship is alongside at a wharf or dockyard, but which one? And what was the ship's name? When and where was she built? And what was her service career?

Send your answers, including a postal address, by email to: sm.ed@kelsey.co.uk; or by post to Mystery Ship, Ships Monthly, Kelsey Media, The Granary, Downs Court, Yalding Hill, Kent ME18 6AL. Emails preferred.



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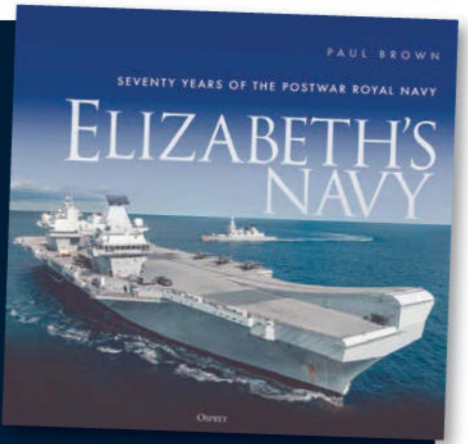
book of the month

Elizabeth's Navy: Seventy Years of the Post-War Royal Navy

Paul Brown

Osprey Publishing, Kemp House, Chawley Park, Oxford OX2 9PH ospreypublishing.com, 344-page hardback, £40.50 free postage; ebook £28.35.



During the 70 years spanned by the reign of Queen Elizabeth II, the Royal Navy changed beyond all recognition. In 1952 the UK was still a global and maritime superpower with a large empire. It had the second largest navy, the largest shipbuilding industry and the largest merchant fleet in the world. The vast networks of seaborne trade routes were policed by a Navy of a size and versatility that it was able to engage independently in many types of conflict.

Seventy years later the UK's superpower role in the world was much diminished, and its empire gone. The nation's shipbuilding industry and merchant fleet were small shadows of their former selves. There had been a dramatic reduction in the size of the Royal Navy and its status as a major navy with worldwide bases and operations had been eclipsed. However, it remained a powerful force because of the potency of its ships, if not the size of the fleet.

The book takes the reader through each decade in turn, outlining key events and developments, and charting the changes to the ships and the size, structure and capabilities of the Navy. Fully illustrated with over 250 colour and B&W images, it also provides a visual record of the ships and operations that featured most prominently in each decade. NL

A Maritime Review of 2021
Krispen Atkinson and David Walker

A Maritime Review of 2021

Krispen Atkinson and David Walker

A Maritime Review of 2021 is the sixth yearbook in the series published by the World Ship Society. It Illustrates some of the more interesting maritime happenings over the past year and the year in review, 2021, started much the same as 2020 finished, with the Covid pandemic impacting the shipping industry.

The cruise industry was still reeling from the shock which had hit it in 2020, with operations halting all round the world but, while travel restrictions remained in place throughout most of the year, some countries began lifting their regulations to allow companies to market short cruises, albeit it with social distancing and often reduced capacity.

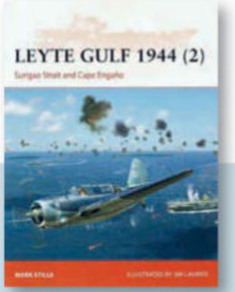
Elsewhere, container ship operators were seeing their highest ever earnings. For some this was a relief after years in the doldrums. South Korea's HMM Line reported that net earnings had climbed to $4.6 billion during the year, offsetting losses of the previous decade.

Naval events included the loss of the Iran Navy replenishment tanker Iris Kharg (431) after a fire. Two Royal Navy Trafalgar class submarines were decommissioned during the year, HMS Talent (S92) and HMS Trenchant (S91), while BNS Godetia (A960) and Belgica (A962) left the Belgian Navy.

On the European ferry scene, the withdrawal of the UK from the EU and the negative impact of Brexit saw ferry and ro-ro operators having to move ships and change services in order to cope with changing freight and passenger demands. But with strong steel prices, the shipbreaking beaches on the Indian sub-continent and at Aliaga were kept busy.

Compiled by Krispen Atkinson and David Walker, this book tells the story of an interesting year, covering the cruise, container, tanker, bulk, coastal and ferry sectors, as well as shipbuilding, conversions and sales, with 211 high-quality colour photographs, supported by informative deep captions. PS

• Published by the World Ship Society Ltd; booksales@worldshipsociety.org; WSS Book Sales, 49 Mount Road, Mitcham, Surrey CR4 3EZ, price £18 plus £3 postage (UK) or £6.50 (Europe).



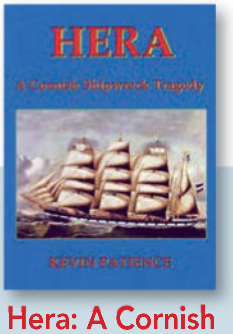
Leyte Gulf 1944 (2): Surigao Strait and Cape Engaño

Mark Stille

The size and complexity of the Battle of Leyte Gulf remains unmatched in naval history. Two United States Navy (USN) fleets (Third and Seventh) faced a much-reduced Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN), severely outnumbered and fatally lacking in airpower.

Complementing the previous volume's coverage of the IJN's First Diversion Attack Force, this superbly illustrated second volume focuses on the forces which were supporting the main Japanese thrust. Naval expert Mark Stille reveals how the Japanese succeeded in luring the US Third Fleet to the north, but at a tremendous cost in the ensuing battle off Cape Engaño. PS

• Published by Osprey Publishing, Kemp House, Cumnor Hill, Oxford, OX2 9PH; info@ospreypublishing.com, www.ospreypublishing.com, price £15.99.



Hera: A Cornish Shipwreck Tragedy

Kevin Patience

This is the tragic story of the loss of an elegant German four-masted sailing ship in the early years of the 20th century on the rugged south coast of Cornwall. Nineteen of the crew died in the raging seas on the night of 31 January/1 February 1914, and five survived. The story made newspaper headlines around the world, and the casualties were buried in the nearby churchyard of Veryan.

The introduction of steam ships in the late 1800s saw a rapid decline in the once graceful sailing greyhounds. Great races had been run in the 19th century, with shipowners competing in the carriage of goods across the world in the fastest times. Hera was one of these sailing ships, and this well-illustrated 72-page book is the story of her life and final voyage. PS

• Published by the author, email saburi@hotmail.com, price £10 inc postage.

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WORLD NAVIES IN 2023

Ships Monthly's annual assessment of global naval developments, including details of some of the more interesting and innovative warship acquisition programmes currently under way.

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CARNIVAL CELEBRATION • A look on board the new Carnival flagship, Carnival Celebration, which has recently entered service in the Caribbean.

SMYRIL LINE • The shipping company Smyril Line provides the Faroe Islands with an essential link to Iceland, northern Europe and the Baltic States.

FERRIES OUT OF POOLE • Barfleur, Condor Liberation, Corbière and Rozel are just some of the many ferries that have sailed from the port of Poole during 50 years of cross-Channel services.

BOEING'S JETFOILS • To see a passenger hydrofoil flying smoothly over choppy seas at 40 knots is no surprise today. But in the 1970s, the Boeing Jetfoil was pure science fiction. However, its success in UK waters was somewhat limited.

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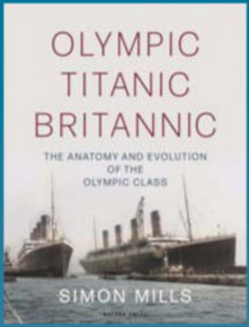
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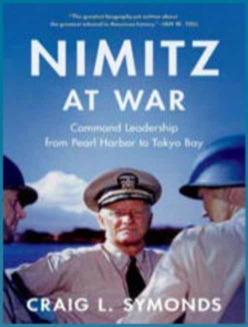
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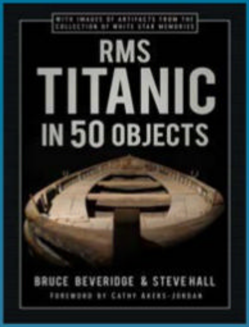
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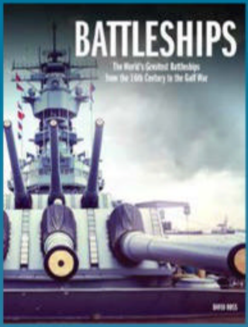
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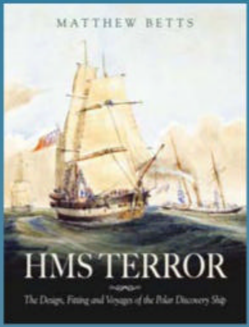
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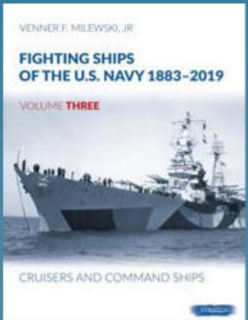
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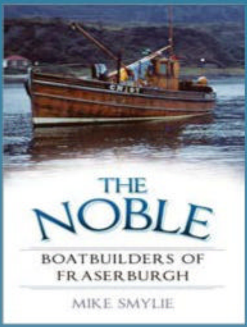
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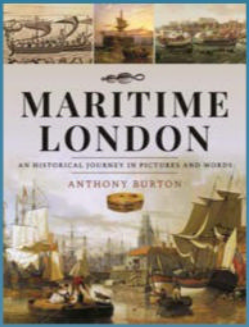
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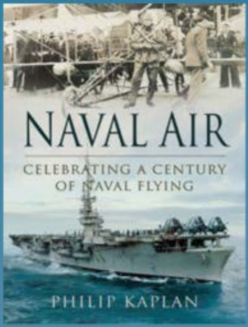
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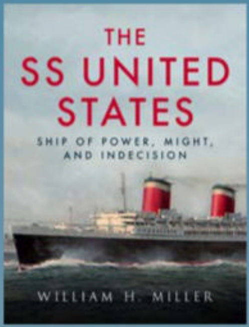
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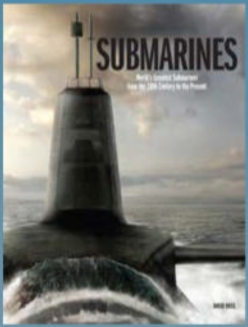
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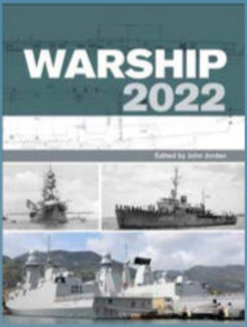
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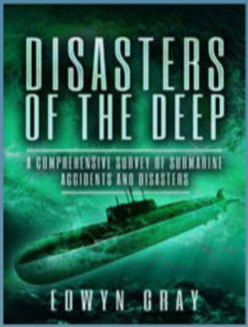
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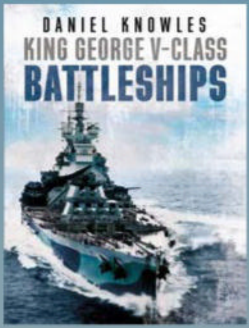
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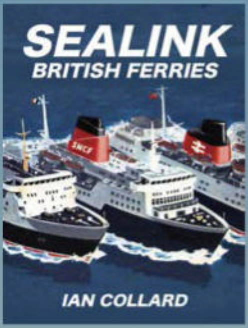
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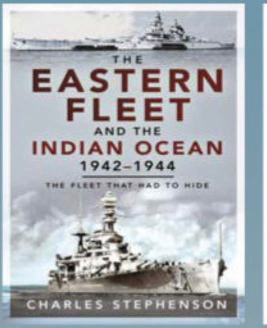
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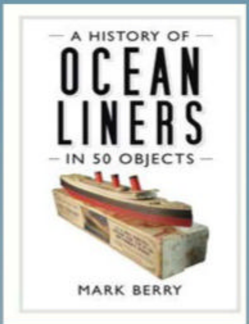
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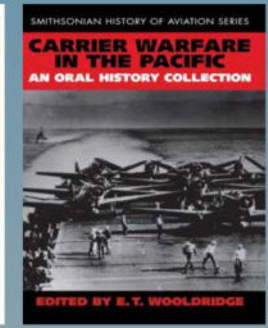
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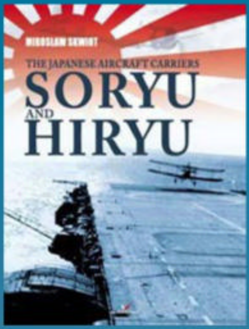
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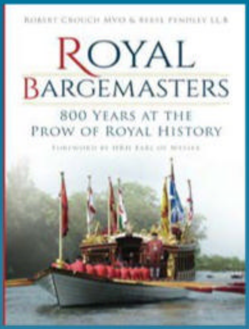
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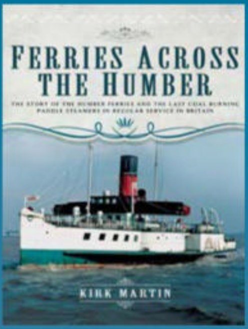
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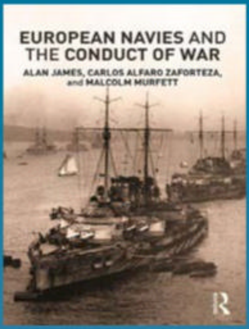
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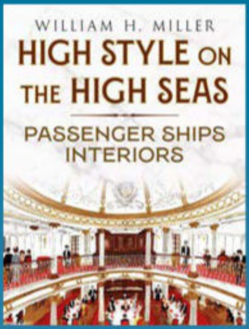
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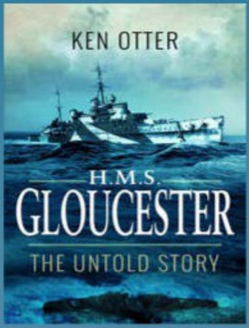
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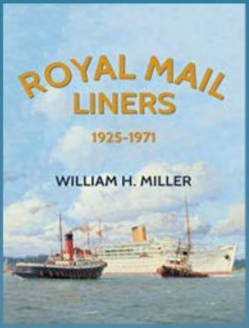
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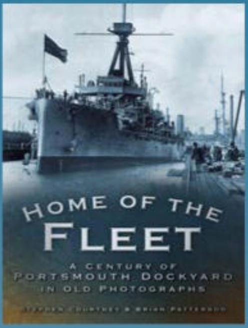
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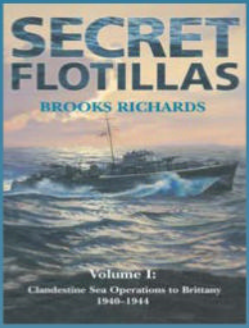
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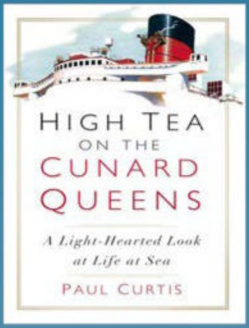
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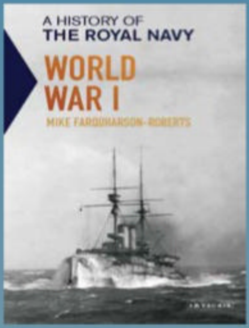
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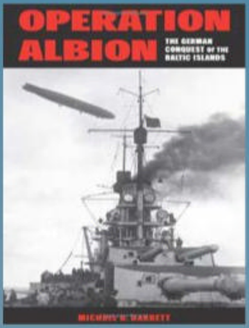
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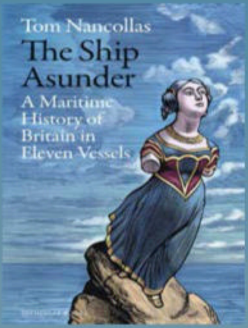
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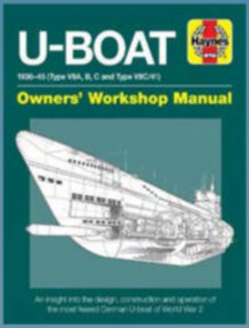
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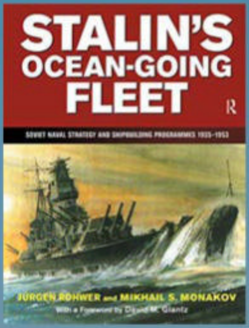
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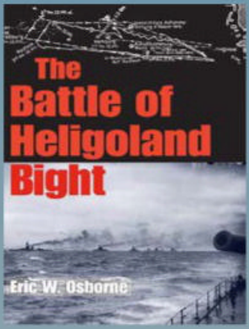
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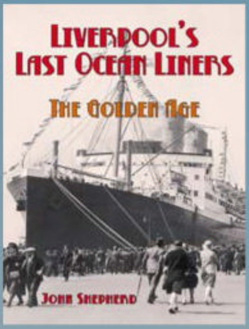
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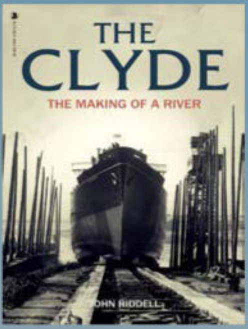
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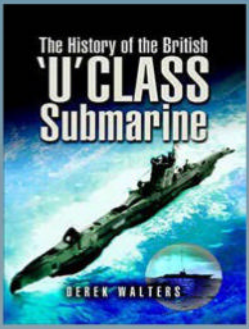
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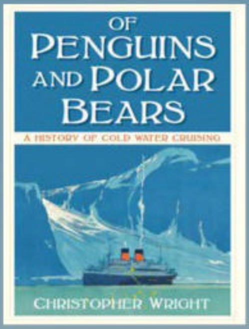
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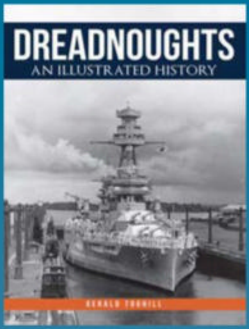
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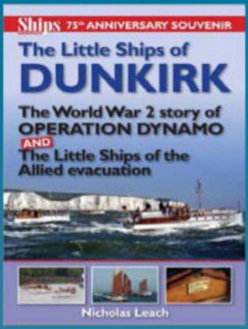
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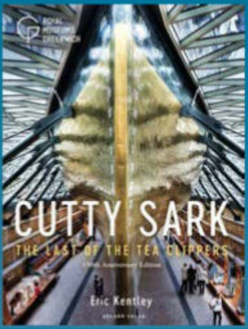
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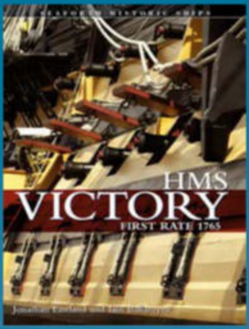
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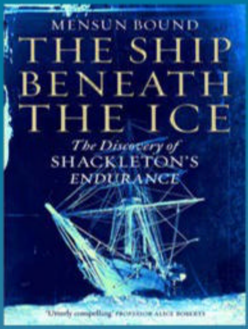
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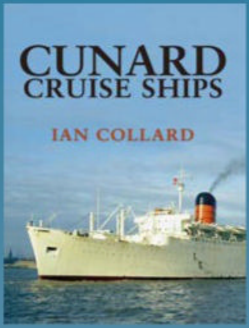
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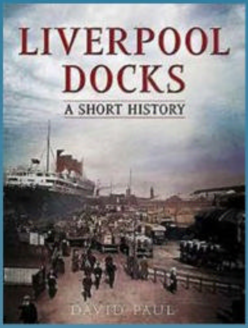
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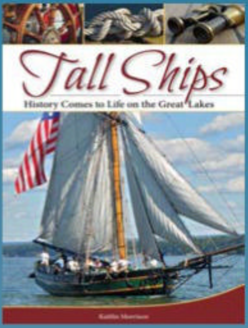
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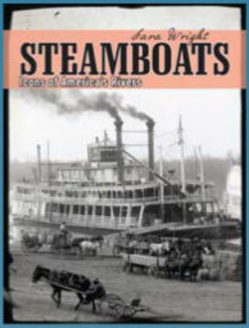
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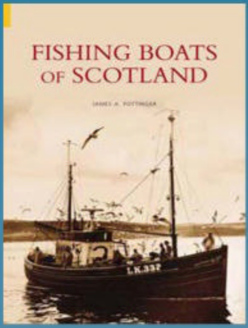
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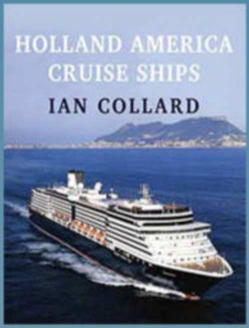
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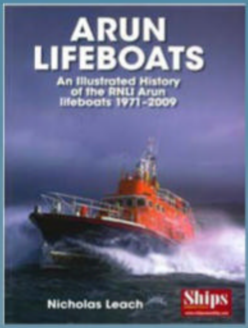
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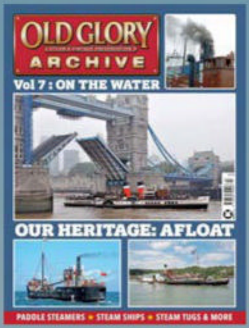
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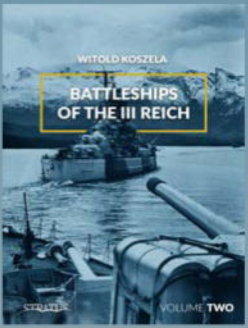
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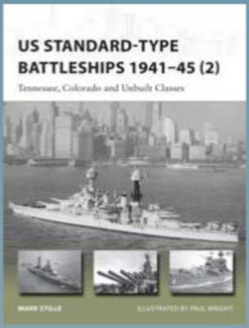
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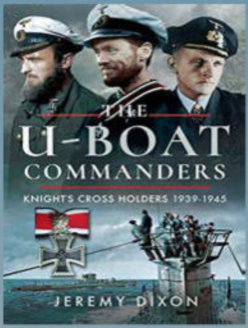
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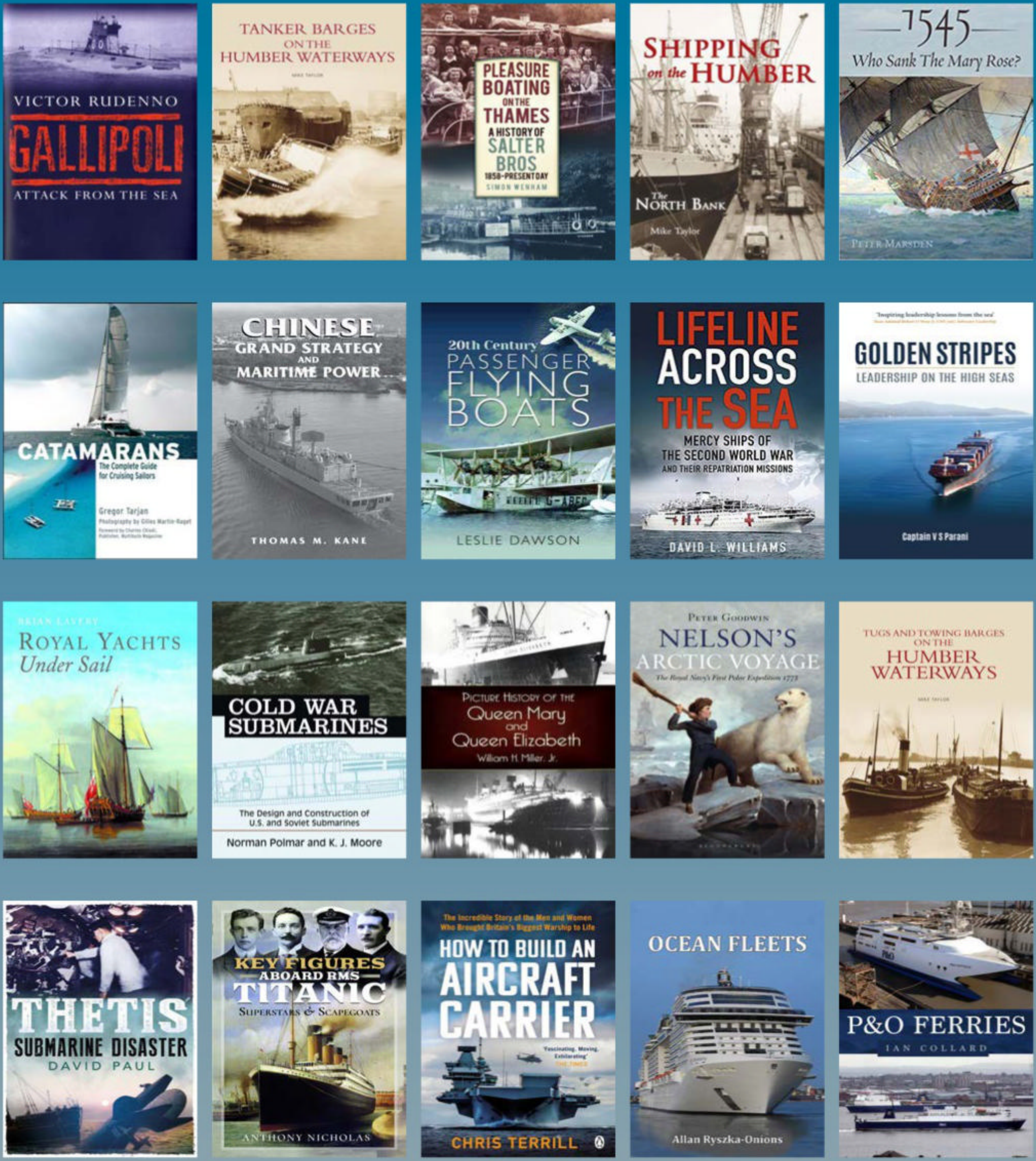
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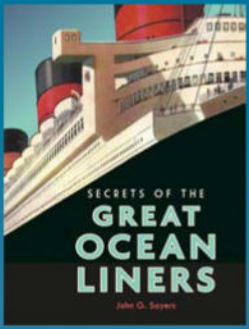
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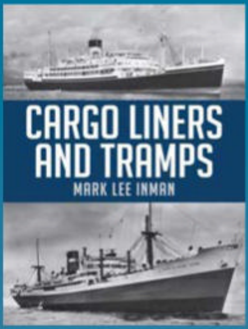
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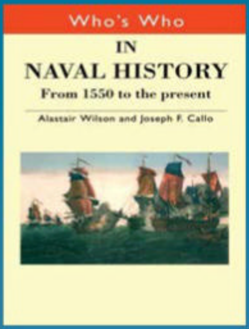
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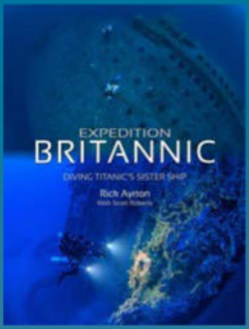
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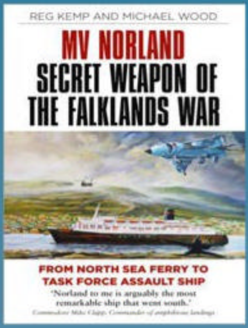
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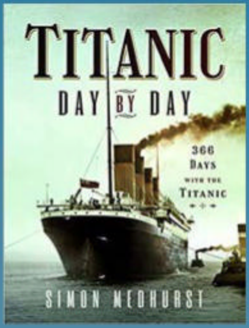
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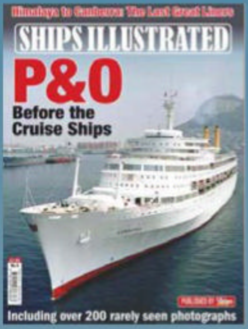
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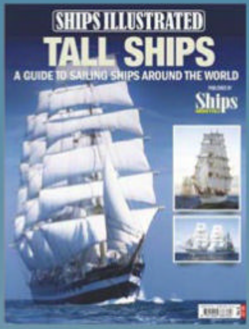
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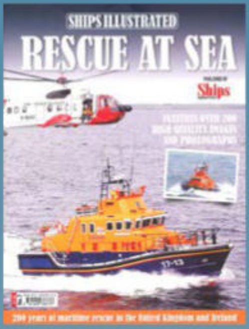
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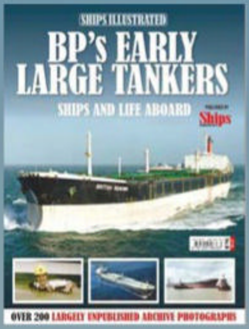
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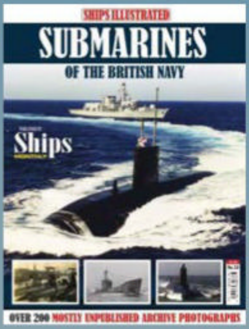
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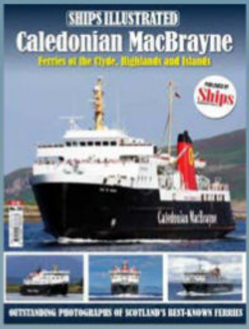
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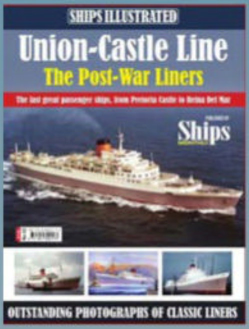
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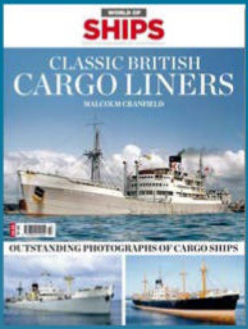
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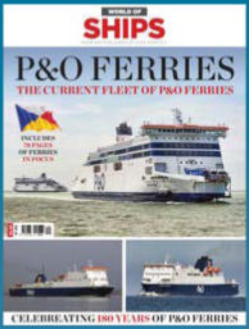
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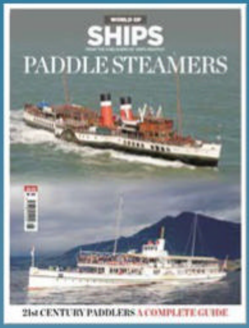
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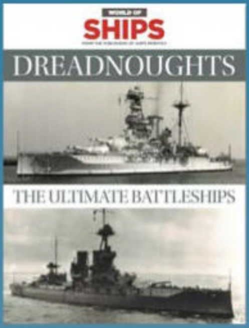
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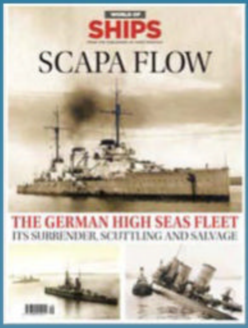
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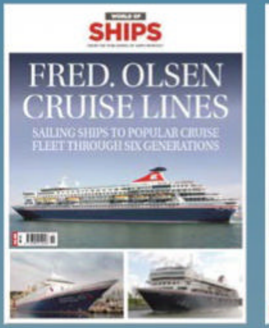
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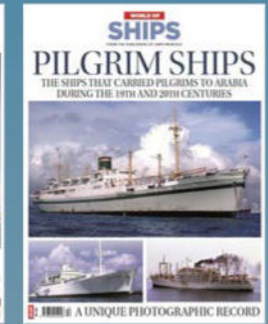
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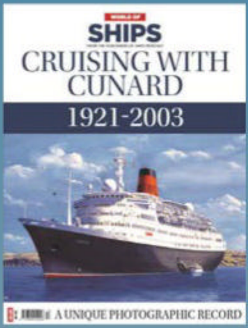
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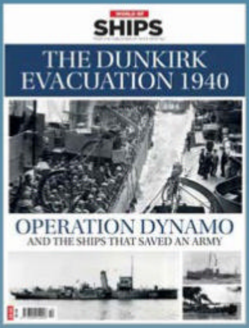
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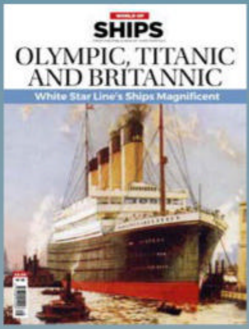
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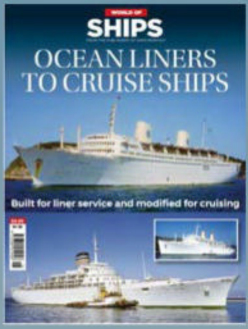
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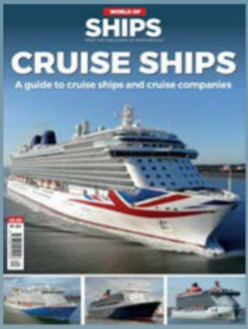
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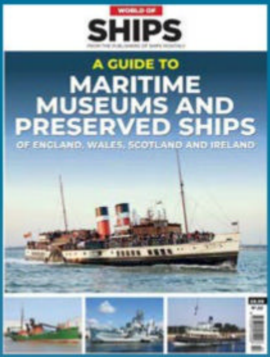
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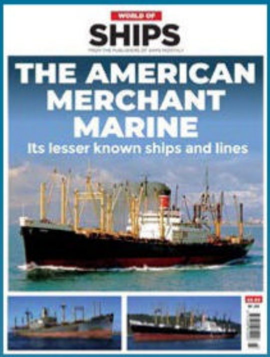
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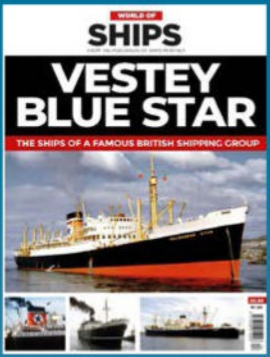
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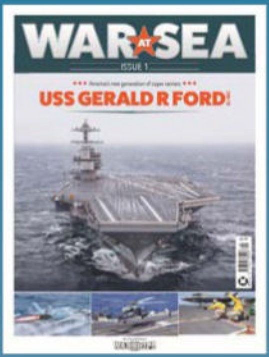
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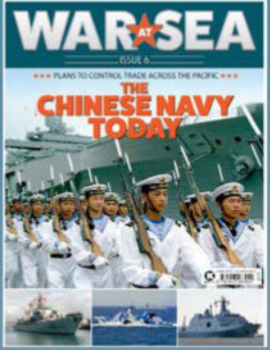
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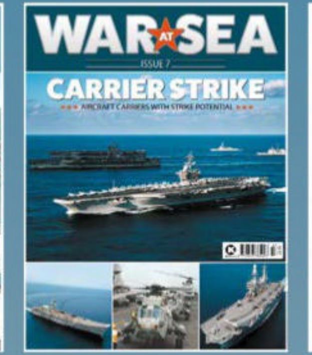
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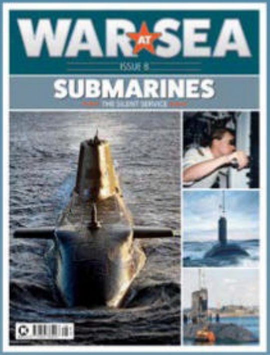
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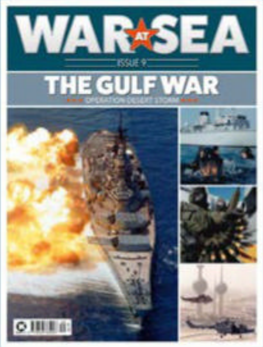
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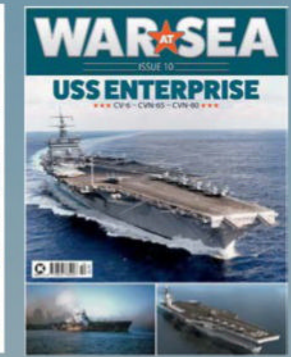
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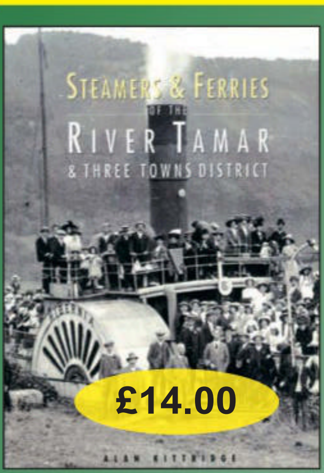
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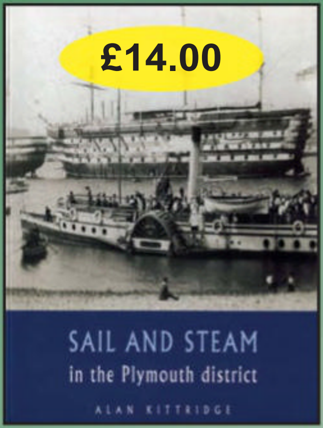
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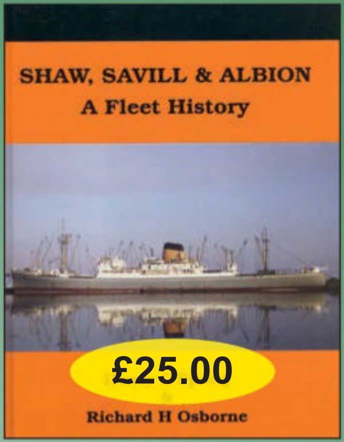
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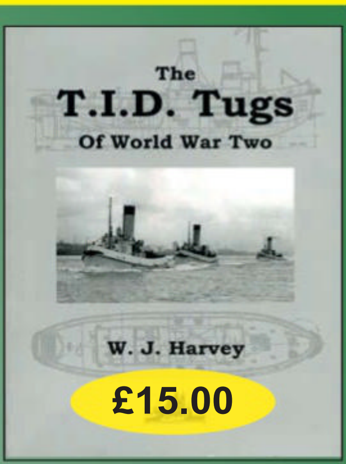
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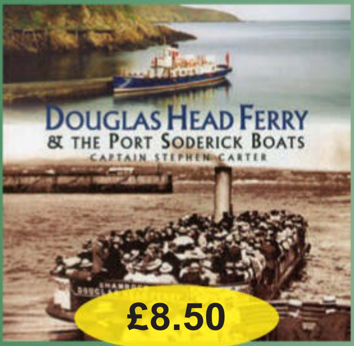
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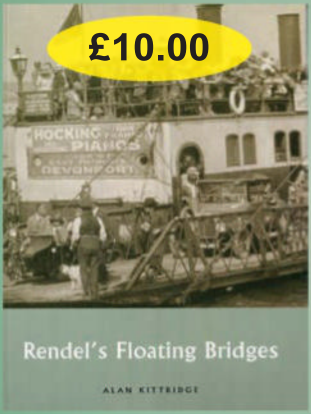
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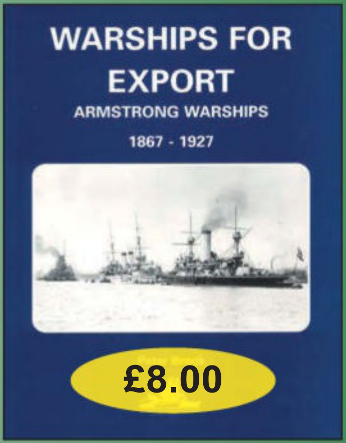
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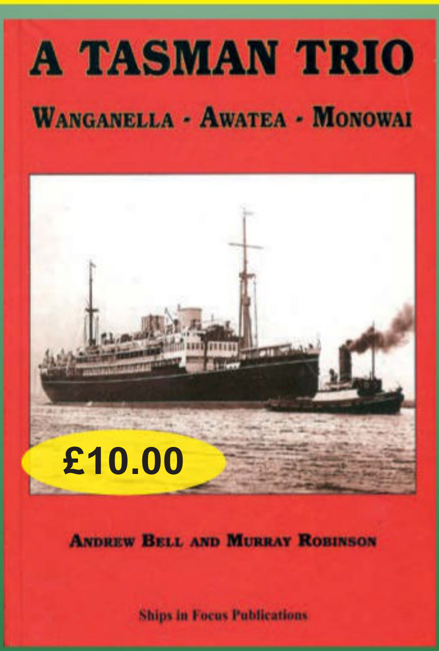
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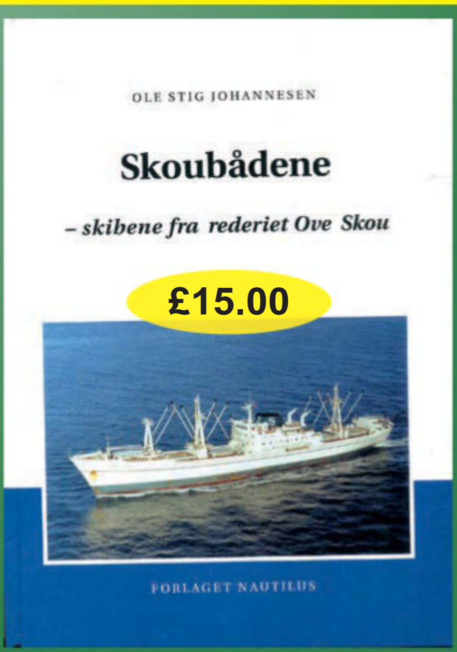
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